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ABSTRACT

Forty-four teachers enrolled in special education graduate courses were surveyed to find out how much time teachers are spending on the development of individualized education programs (IEPs) and to discover implications regarding instructional time lost in the IEP process. Literature was reviewed on the field of education prior to P.L. 94-142 (the Education for All Handicapped Children Act), the mandates and results of P.L. 94-142, IEP components, procedures to develop and monitor IEPs, the role of the special education teacher, the issue of time, and future research. The questionnaire was designed to gain information on characteristics of the teacher being surveyed, content of the IEPs, time spent on IEP development and writing, and the amount of instructional time devoted to IEP development. Data were analyzed for such areas as the type of teaching position, kind of training, time spent on educational and related services, and preparation for the IEP conference. Major findings included that many teachers are alarmed about the time demands or the overwhelming responsibility when they have little or no help on developing IEPs; that as the years of teaching experience increased, the time to develop IEPs decreased; and that the type of training had no significant effect, although those with no training spent less time on developing IEPs. Appended is a copy of the survey instrument. (SW)

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INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS-
HOW MUCH TIME DO THEY TAKE?

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

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of Educational Studies

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at New Paltz

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

How much time are teachers presently spending on developing an Individualized Education Plan?

Significance of the Problem

The Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, is one of the most outstanding mandates delivered by Public Law 94-142, effective October 1, 1977. That monumental piece of legislation defines an IEP as "a written statement for a handicapped child that is developed and implemented in accordance with sections 121a341-121a349" of the Rules and Regulations. The IEP must include for the child statements concerning present level of performance, annual and specific goals, educational and related services, projected dates for initiation and duration, and evaluation procedures (Public Law 94-142; Kaye and Aserlind, 1979). This written plan, although it is not a legal contract (Office of Special Education Policy Paper, 1979), has created optimistic expectation for the education of all handicapped children (Carpenter, 1979).

On the other hand, the IEP has become a controversial issue among educators, administrators, parents, and school districts. Much confusion still exists on who implements the

plan, how it is implemented, and how accountability is involved (Geiser, 1979). Kaye and Aserlind (1979) have described the IEP as a product (the written plan) and a process (the meetings in which the teacher, parents, and a representative of the school or agency, by law, determine the needs and goals to make the plan). Consequently, Crisler (1979) advocated that a team approach is needed to carry out the IEP process as the law intended. Yet, such a wide variance of methods and procedures are used to develop and monitor IEPs that Alper (1978) cited a need for a handbook of standard operating procedures. Several such handbooks, system plans, and workshop formats have been developed to meet that need and are reviewed in Chapter 2 of this study.

The role of the special education teacher seems most affected by the mandated IEP process. Even though the field of special education has long practiced individualized programming, special education teachers have been particularly concerned about their role. Often having the primary responsibility for the IEP conference, development, and implementation (Goldstein et.al., 1980; Safer, 1978; Carpenter, 1979), teachers, reported Safer (p.5), have feared their role would change from "providers of instruction to instructional managers." They also believed that inservice training and support in resources were critical to successful IEP implementation. Since "developing goals and specifying objectives in a sequential fashion is tedious and time consuming"

(Turnbull et. al., 1978:54), teachers were especially concerned about "inordinate demands on teacher time" and the infringement upon personal time (Safer, 1978:19). Teacher stress has also been linked to work overload (Bensky et al., 1980).

The issue of time appears in a large majority of the literature dealing with IEPs. Crisler (1979:101) exemplified this by stating "The amount of time and effort needed to develop and to objectively write an IEP for each handicapped child. . .is enormous, particularly in the first few years of implementation of Public Law 94-142." Safer (1978) cautioned that teacher "burn out" could be a disturbing consequence of such time demands and it should not go without attention.

One part of Project IEP, a study developed to formulate the Rules and Regulations for Public Law 94-142 (Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, 1977), was devoted to how much time teachers were spending on development of IEPs (Safer, 1978). Teachers estimated five to six and one-half hours for a new referral and two to four hours for a current IEP. Another study by Davis (1977) indicated a mean of five hours per IEP for preschool handicapped children. However, both of these studies were conducted when IEPs were first being introduced as a mandated procedure.

The question raised, upon reviewing the literature, is, how much time are teachers currently spending to develop IEPs? Shanker (1980:52) pointed out another issue related

to this question: "Teachers complain they have no time left to teach. . .Immediate research is needed on whether IEPs, as defined under this law, actually enhance a child's education or work to prevent it. Too often, teachers have found the latter to be true." Recent research indicates that the constraints of time are a crucial issue and teachers have shown increased stress and concern with work over-load. Many researchers point up time as a major problem, and some are asking if all this time for paperwork and red tape is detracting from instructional time.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out if, three years after Public Law 94-142 IEP mandates began, teachers are managing time better as a result of becoming more accustomed to IEP development. Also, the study is designed to discover any implications regarding how much instructional time is lost during the IEP process.

Assumptions and Limitations

The sample population for the study was limited to forty-four teachers attending Special Education graduate courses at State University of New York at New Paltz. A larger sample could possibly produce more realistic results. Out of all the teachers surveyed, self-contained classroom teachers were the most heavily represented: twenty-five. Such representation may vary in a larger population.

The length of time to develop, conduct, and analyze this study was three months (September 4 to December 11, 1980).

The time limitation, then, confined the scope of the study. Time was also a factor in conducting the survey. Respondents were limited to ten to fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaire, which involved estimating different amounts of time to develop parts of their IEPs. Aslo, the questionnaire was distributed at the beginning of a graduate course class (5:00 P.M.), and many respondents had been working all day. It was assumed that answers given were as accurate and realistic as possible, given the conditions of the survey.

Finally, the questionnaire showed some weaknesses in format and responses. Question number seven regarding amount of time spent to determine educational and related services was often misinterpreted, demonstrated by respondents asking for clarification. Physical placement of the question may have been misleading, or many teachers are unfamiliar with the meaning of the terms. A few respondents gave no response to certain items, while a few gave write-in answers which did not answer the question (those answers were disqualified). The results of the study must be considered in light of the limitations involved.

Definition of Terms

The following list defines major terms used in this study.

annual goal - a general statement, established by assessments, which addresses the needs or deficiencies in a skill of the handicapped child (Office of Special Education, 1979). Example: Jill will improve peer interaction.

CEC - The Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, Virginia.

COH - Committee on the Handicapped.

education and related services - special education or modified regular class procedures; transportation, medical diagnosis, speech/language remediation, adaptive physical education or other developmental, corrective and supportive activities (Reynolds, 1977).

IEP - Individualized Education Program; a written statement for a handicapped child, developed and implemented in accordance with Final Rules and Regulations of Public Law 94-142. It must include present level of performance, goals and objectives, educational and related services, projected dates of service, and evaluation procedures (Public Law 94-142 Rules and Regulations, 1977).

mastery learning - a teaching strategy in which a student must demonstrate mastery of material or skills before proceeding to a new skill or another sequence of skill (Johnson and Ruskin, 1977).

OSE - Office of Special Education.

Public Law 94-142 - the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975, which guarantees the right of all handicapped children to a free, appropriate public education. Final Rules and Regulations of the law effective 1977.

regular classroom teacher - an elementary or secondary teacher who teaches normal children, and in some cases, handicapped children who are "mainstreamed" into the classroom for appropriate needs (Smith, 1974).

resource room teacher - a specialist or special education teacher to whom individual children or small groups of children can be referred for remedial instruction in specific areas (Smith, 1974).

self-contained teacher - a specialist or special education teacher who teaches children whose educational

performance, social, and personal behavior are sufficiently abnormal to dictate full-time placement in a special class (Smith, 1974).

specific objective - a specific statement which addresses a need or deficiency in a skill of the handicapped child, indicating gradual increments toward the annual goal (Weintraub et al., 1977). Example: Jill will greet peers with appropriate words 100 percent of the time. It serves as a basis to develop a detailed instructional plan (OSE, 1979).

task analysis - a method of teaching a complex task by teaching a student to accomplish each subtask that is an integral part of the task at an acceptable level (Smith, 1974).

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

History Prior to Public Law 94-142

"Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, has changed the quality and character of the education of students with disabilities." (Schleifer et al., 1980:19). This monumental piece of legislation, effective October 1, 1977, has indeed become the "national vehicle whereby the promises. . .we have hoped for, for so long, may become a reality." (Abeson and Zettel, 1977:177). And though this law has been hailed as revolutionary for Special Education, it "can be credited for codifying long recognized superior teaching practice." (National Advisory Committee on the Handicapped, 1977:6).

In the wide field of education, individualized instruction has been a proven success. In 1978, Hinton found that research during the previous three years indicated the following: Individualized instruction systems work "as well or better than traditional;" students learn more, make higher grades, save time, perform better on exams and feel improvement of self concept and self confidence; learning objectives produce significant increases in learning; retention of learning is improved; and, mastery learning reduces forgetting.

Similarly, a majority of studies give evidence that

behavioral instruction is significantly more effective than conventional approaches to instruction in a variety of disciplines (Johnson and Ruskin, 1977). Four features of behavioral instruction are: frequent quizzing, self-pacing, peer proctoring, and mastery learning. These features are instrumental in eliminating "accumulated ignorance" and failure, and they constitute more humane ways of attaining higher educational standards (Johnson and Ruskin, 1977:9). These four methods are familiar tools to many teachers today who are involved with meeting the requirements of Public Law 94-142 while serving handicapped children.

But although individualization has been a proven success in education, it also can prove to be an enormous undertaking. In a regular classroom, Brockley (1979) individualized her curriculums by forming six reading groups, three math groups, and two science groups. She found the consequences to be mounds of correcting work after school, volumes of prepared material and plans for each day, behavioral problems during independent work, and a resulting headache from the perpetual preparation. She resolved her "headache" the following year by changing to three reading groups and one math group which made a greater range of abilities within groups. She incorporated peer-tutoring, and self correction of work which rewarded experts who finished quickly. Her observations were: more time was available for well-planned creative/social studies/science programs for the whole class; the class showed a stronger feeling of unity and companionship;

it seemed to be a positive experience to contend with different learning styles and speeds. Here, then, was a case of individualization which presented more problems than it solved.

It is the field of special education in particular that dictates that a "specific program must be developed for each handicapped child based on individual strengths, weaknesses"(Armstrong, 1978:25). Samuel Kirk (1940), a leader in special education, urged the identification of specific needs prior to development of an adequate educational plan. Cruikshank and Johnson (1958, 1971) have stressed the importance of educational diagnosis, while Kirk, Kolestoe, and Smith (1972, 1965, 1974, respectively) pointed out the futility of trying to remediate deficits of the educational program without first determining what the deficits are. Special education methods and strategies have necessarily centered on individualized strategies (Armstrong, 1978).

Legislation: Public Law 94-142

Public Law 94-142 has sealed the rights of all handicapped children to an individualized program. According to the National Advisory Committee on the Handicapped (1977:6):

> "it provides the opportunity to see handicapped children as individuals rather than in terms of their disabilities . . .it serves as a quality control mechanism, fosters greater trust between school and parent, and replaces random instructional activities based on standardized goals with goals important to the particular student. . . it induces an interdisciplinary approach."

The forecast by Goodman in 1976 has come to pass: "Schools in every part of the nation are destined to feel

its impact" (Carpenter, 1979:309). Carpenter has pointed out that "94-142 is unprecedented in terms of its administrative specificity." In order to meet the innumerable demands of the law, "many professionals are involved very deeply in working out systems that can be applied at local and state levels" (Reynolds, 1977:685). Also, "Educators are busy educating each other on due process, IEP's, hearing and appeal processes, monitoring files, etc. - hopefully leading to creative problem solving in each child's life, but often seems oriented to mere compliance with regulations of the law" (Reynolds, 1977:686).

Teachers have reported that their main information source on Public Law 94-142 has been the educational hierarchy: other special education teachers, memos or meetings of special education cooperatives, informal contact with special education cooperative administrators (Carpenter, 1979). This same report has shown a disparity between service deliverers and service recipients (parents) regarding expectations for change: parents were much more positive. The majority of educators expected long range planning for children to improve, but saw little or no change in twenty categories of special education services. It was noted that this disparity could mean eventual due process hearings.

Several significant components of Public Law 94-142 (P.L. 94-142) should be described for an overview. One provision of the law is the concept of placement of a child

in the least restrictive environment. This provision requires that

> "placement decisions be made on the basis of the individual's needs. . .No child may be removed from regular class participation any more than is appropriate for that child and P.L. 94-142 requires documentation in the IEP of the extent to which the child can participate in the regular program. . .handicapped children have access to the variety of educational programs and services available to nonhandicapped students such as art, music, industrial arts, consumer and homemaking education" (Hayes and Higgins, 1978:268).

Another provision is the necessary procedural safeguards which "ensure that handicapped students receive a free, appropriate, public education. . .(and that) due process is afforded. . .at every point educational decisions are made" (Hayes and Higgins, 1978:268). Due process gives parents the right to a hearing if they disagree with the written Individualized Education Plan, or IEP. Confidentiality is also ensured concerning all pertinent records and reports of each handicapped child (Hayes and Higgins, 1978).

The law also provides that each local education agency must specify in writing the system of personnel development as required by the state education agency: this refers to relevant inservice training (Hayes and Higgins, 1978).

The "backbone of P.L. 94-142" (Dougherty, 1979:49) is, indeed, the Individualized Education Plan or, the IEP. The IEP describes the educational objectives for the handicapped child and lists the services needed to meet the goals (Dougherty, 1979). The purpose of the IEP is to "set forth in writing a committment of resources that indicates what

special education and related services will be provided to meet each handicapped child's unique needs. . .It is a management tool that allows parents, teachers, and administrators to know what educational services have been committed." (p.49)

"The IEP can be viewed as a burden of more paperwork or the opportunity to improve the quality of education for handicapped students and the diagnostic prescriptive skills of teachers" (Turnbull, 1978). The purpose of an IEP is not to plan the total instruction of the child (Hayes and Higgins, 1978).

The IEP

The IEP has been controversial as well as somewhat complex. Project IEP was developed by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH), U.S. Office of Education, and Nero and Associates in cooperation with four states in order to gather information (opinions, experience, etc.) to formulate the Rules and Regulations following passage of P.L. 94-142 (Kaye and Aserlind 1979). The outcome of the Project was that the IEP must be perceived "as both a product (written statement) and a process. . .The process provides the vehicle for the development of the product" (Kaye and Aserlind, 1979: 139). In addition, the Office of Special Education's (OSE, formerly BEH) Policy Paper (1979:20) has restated the IEP provision as two main parts: "(A) the IEP meeting(s) - at which parents and school personnel jointly make decisions about a handicapped child's 'program,' and (B) the IEP document."

Public Law 94-142 defines an IEP as "a written statement for a handicapped child that is developed and implemented in accordance with sections 121a 341 - 121a 349." of the Rules and Regulations. Therefore, as a product, the IEP must include:

- -A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance.
- -A statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives;
- -A statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child, and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular educational programs;
- -The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of the services; and
- -Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved. (P.L. 94-142 Rules and Regulations, Section 121a 346, p. 42491; Kaye and Aserlind, 1979; Weintraub et al., 1977).

Besides being a management tool, the IEP is a compliance/monitoring document to be used by monitoring personnel in each governmental level, a commitment of resources, a communication vehicle between parents and personnel involved with the child and an evaluation device for use in determining the extent of the child's progress toward meeting objectives (OSE Policy Paper,1979). Note: the law does not hold teachers/personnel accountable if goals are not achieved (121a 349). "The resulting product is a kind of road map that includes the richness and texture of the terrain,i.e., the child. . ." (Kaye and Aserlind, 1979:139). It represents a balance between educational, psychological, social, emotional, cultural dimensions, and the parent, educator resources

(Kaye and Aserlind 1979).

As a process, the IEP as required in P.L. 94-142 must be

> "developed in any meeting by a representative of the local educational agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children, the teacher, the parents, or guardian of each child, and whenever appropriate, such child (Sec.4(a)(4)19; Hayes and Higgins 1978:278).

The Rules and Regulations set forth overall phases for implementation, as reviewed by Kaye and Aserlind:

> Develop the product portion
>
> . . .Implement the goals. . .and objectives
>
> -Evaluate efficacy and achievement level the product requires.
>
> -Modify and/or retain all or part of product as step in child. . .learning. . .and changing. (1979:147)

The purpose, then, of meetings (implied to be a series) is "to develop, review and revise the educational program" (Kaye and Aserlind, 1979:147). However, Kaye and Aserlind have found that teachers or administrators are often seen as one-shot decisions; involving many persons is often not feasible; effective parent participation has rarely been achieved. They conclude that if any process component of the IEP is inadequate, the product will suffer. Project IEP did indicate that the IEP implementation was viewed as "greatly increasing the quality of educational services to children" (P.143).

During the fall of 1979, the Office of Special

Education (OSE, formerly Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH)) developed a policy paper concerning "Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) Restatement and Interpretation of Requirements under Part B of the EHA, As Amended by PL. 94-142." The paper was facilitated by meetings to get feedback from "(1) parents and advocates (2) teachers, (3) regular and special education administrators and (4) related services providers" (Schliefer et al., 1980:19). It is an important aid to understanding the intent of the law and will be referred to throughout this study.

Schulman (1980:24-25) has pointed out that the ". . . OSE did not want to overregulate;" that state education offices are left ". . .to develop formats appropriate to them;" and parents should not be made to feel overwhelmed by involvement of too many participants in meetings.

IEP Components

So how is the IEP initiated and how are the components described in current literature? P.L. 94-142 states "On October 1, 1977 and at the beginning of each school year, a school or public agency must have an IEP for each child receiving special education" (P.L. 94-142; American Alliance, 1977:1; Armstrong 1978:28). The OSE (Policy Paper 1979:22) clarifies this point by stating that once a child is determined as handicapped through evaluation, the ". . .agency has up to 30 days to hold an IEP meeting;. . .the child must be placed immediately after the meeting." This clearly

indicates that the IEP must be developed before placement. The OSE adds that an IEP need not be reviewed or revised at the beginning of each school year, but must be in effect at that time. A meeting for review is required at least annually and may be held at any time during the year (OSE Policy Paper, 1979; American Alliance, 1977). This allows personnel responsible for a large number of students to schedule over a reasonable period of time (American Alliance, 1977).

An initial assessment (parental consent required by law, Reynolds, 1977) is the most essential means to determine placement of a handicapped child. "The assessment-placement committee is responsible for the determination of the initial present levels of performance, or of the needs and strengths . . ." (Alper, 1978:6). The intent of the evaluation, according to 1974 BEH guidelines, "should be the development of an educational plan for the child, based on a description of his/her strengths and weaknesses. Whenever possible, parents should participate in the development of the educational plan for the child" (Weintraub et al., 1977:40). An individual's needs cannot be determined accurately by a single assessment device: thus, various inputs (formal, informal; objective, subjective; observation, anecdotal) are necessary. (American Alliance, 1977). Cause and effect relationships must be discovered to increase chances for success of a program (American Alliance, 1977). Once the needs have been established, annual goal statements should be derived for each need listed

(Carrol, et al.,1978). It is interesting to note, however, that Alper (1978) found that a great deal of research has accumulated that indicates the large majority of assessment procedures do not lead to educationally effective programs.

Little information is available concerning the statement of educational and related services: namely, who should list the services, at what time in the process? "Services refer to transportation, medical diagnosis, and the like" along with special education or modified regular educational procedures; also "speech and language remediation or adaptive physical education or other developmental, corrective, and supportive activities may be defined as related services. . . or as special or modified regular education, depending upon the state" (Reynolds, 1977:125). Shanker (1980:53) stated that the American Federation of Teachers believe that "instructional materials, equipment and facilities must be adapted to the needs of exceptional children in the regular classroom and throughout the school." This would necessarily need to be noted in the IEP. The agency must provide the services as recommended.

A discussion of alternatives for placement is required to determine final selections, as well as the rationale for the decision (Hudson and Graham; 1978; Alper, 1978). The parent role is very important and is legally required in decision making process (Ballard and Zeital, 1977; Hayes and Higgins, 1978; P.L. 94-142). At this point the Total Service

Aspect of the IEP (Volkmer and Pasanella) has been completed. In some cases the Individualized Implementation Plan has been completed also (Alper,1978). However, many districts have found it unfeasible to have all implementors attend the committee meeting. In addition, implementors usually require time with the child before listing procedures that the Individual Plan necessitates (Alper,1978).

The OSE policy paper (1979:21) has indicated that it is not permissible to "first place a child and then develop an IEP;" however, a "trial placement" may be deemed necessary which requires an "interim IEP." This procedure requires parental consent and involvement, a specific timeline to complete evaluation and make judgements about placement (30 days) and a meeting to finalize the child's IEP, all of which are spelled out in the policy paper.

Besides the initial assessment, evaluation and assessment are required to determine present level of performance for the annual review of the IEP. The purpose is to determine "whether the instructional objectives are being achieved" (Weintraub, et al., 1977:40). The evaluation approach is not identification but determination of what a child knows and does. This provides a baseline to project what the child should do and how long to learn it (Weintraub, et al., 1977). The Massachusetts CORE Evaluation Manual Guidelines say the emphasis should be positive: what the student does. Any constraints should be obtained from a

physician and noted on the performance. (Weintraub, et al., 1977).

The annual goals, then, are established as a result of the present level of performance. The OSE policy paper (1979:22) states "there should be a direct relationship between the present levels. . .and other components of the IEP." Therefore, a deficiency in a skill should be addressed by goals and objectives and by services to be provided (OSE, 1979). The annual goals for any student can only be an educated approximation, but progress toward these goals can be systematic (Turnbull, 1978). The purpose of goals, including short term instructional objectives is to provide a "mechanism for determining (1) whether the anticipated outcomes are being met. . .(progressing) and (2) whether the placement and services are appropriate to the child's special learning needs. (OSE, 1979:23).

The specific objectives (short-term objectives) are the heart of the plan (Weintraub et al., 1977). The OSE (1979:23) clarifies that the IEP goals and objectives are not intended to be used as a detailed instructional plan, but to set the direction for "IEP implementers" and to serve "as the basis for developing a detailed instructional plan for the child." Based on information gathered, the criteria for objectives are:

> "1. They must be developmentally rational. . ." and "should indicate gradual increments toward that ultimate goal (example: to say two words, toward complex sentences.)

2. They must be sensitive to parental priorities. . . objectives should be set to eliminate. . .behavior. . . so that the student can function in an increased number of environments. . ."

3. . . .all objectives must relate to the student's movement toward a least restrictive setting. . .in more normal education programs for at least part of the day. (Weintraub et al., 1977:41).

A large majority of expert opinion (NASDE, 1976, Torres, 1978, Hudson and Graham,1978) indicates that short-term objectives should be written by the implementors (Alper, 1978). Hayes (1977) recommends there be three or four short-term objectives. He suggests that they be written in pupil terms, be measurable, stated specifically, and be realistic. Hayes also recommends that the affective goals be written in terms of percent of increase or decrease on a criterion basis. The social goals are difficult to specify and must be in objective, measurable terms (Geiser, 1979).

The methods and materials must be specialized (Geer and Torres, 1977) with reasonable expectation of producing objective (Weintraub et al., 1977; Abeson, 1977; Alper, 1978); but no guarantees are implied (Hayden and Edgar, 1978; Alper, 1978). Specification of how the mastery will be demonstrated (antecedent events, responses, correction procedures, modifications, daily evaluation) is not required on the IEP, according to Bateman in 1977; therefore, Alper (1978) concluded that the degree of detail on methods and materials is limited.

A time line for reaching objectives must be set to include begin/end dates for service, percent of time and

review dates to be provided for each service listed (Alper, 1978). This relates to the IEP being "designed to insure on-going accountability and protection for the child and parents" (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:23).

Last, evaluation criteria must be set, based upon criterion reference test procedures and outcomes of behavioral objectives set (Alper, 1978). Continuous measurement techniques are the most promising means to determine how learning is progressing (Weintraub et al., 1977). Weintraub continues that any "one shot" evaluation sample tells us little about ability; sampling over time gives a more accurate assessment.

The IEP is viewed differently from a several perspectives. Geisner (1979) observed a wide divergence in how various school systems view the IEP: some view it as a sole curriculum. He states that it is <u>not</u>. Rather it should be a guide to special services that are needed to supplement regular curriculum appropriate to a child's level of functioning. The OSE policy (1979) most certainly agrees that the IEP is not intended to address. . .daily, weekly, monthly instructional plans.

A parent who is a mother of a handicapped child and a member of the National Advisory Committee on the Handicapped would prefer to see an expansion of the IEP contents to include:

> "(1) a statement of my child's present developmental level and in all areas relating to physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

(2) a statement of my child's learning strengths

(3) a statement of any medical, environmental, or cultural consideration particular to my child

(4) a statement of my child's educational needs and their relationship to the total sequence of developmental skills.

(5) a statement of specific goals and timetables.

(6) a statement of instructional alternatives

(7) listing of all appropriate educational materials relevant to my child's learning characteristics.

(8) a clear deliniation of the responsibility of the entire planning team

(9) established time frames for daily programming, period review and evaluation.

(10) description of program procedures.

Goals should reflect a "Sequence Skills Development" (objectives, involved activities (readily changed, daily if needed) with system of continuous evaluation).

Whatever format, the strength and viability depends largely on the quality and breadth of information gathered. It should reflect interdisciplinary team contributions and objectives and opinion of parent. (National Advisory COH, 1977:8).

A few studies have been done to evaluate IEPs in terms of quantity of components and overall quality. Anderson, Barner and Larson (1978:207-208) had trained evaluators evaluate 400 IEPs of pupils who were learning disabled and mainstreamed in Contra Costa County, California. Their findings were as follows:

1. In terms of quantity there was an average of:
   five educational needs
   four general goals
   four teaching methods
   four recommended materials
   six instructional objectives.

Five months were estimated for objective achievement. The nearly one-to-one needs-to-objectives suggests that fewer objectives were written than might be required for a student.

2. Seventy five percent of the instructional objectives were in academic areas. Ten percent of the objectives were social, emotional, behavioral needs.

3. Special education teachers were whole or partly responsible for implementation of 75 percent of the objectives or more, regular teachers for 25 percent of the objectives.

4. Three of four of the objectives were assessed by teacher-made measures; the remainder were by published tests, rating scales, observation schedules.

5. Six percent had no parent signature. In addition some showed no check for parent approval and awareness of due process rights.

In terms of quality (rated on numerical scales), all parts were, on the average: high quality free from jargon, appropriately related to one another.

The summary of the study indicates that writers should be intensively trained in goal and objective writing; that documentation of communication with parents should be closely monitored; and that full attention to emotional, social, behavioral needs of pupil should be in the program.

Schneck (1978:3,14) reported the results of a study examining 300 IEP's and psychoeducational assessments for educable mentally retarded, learning disabled, and non-label students from thirty seven towns and cities in the state of Connecticut. The results revealed serious needs to be addressed by special education, especially the refinement of the diagnostic-instructional link.

The same study showed the following omissions:

Sixty four percent of cases did not report current level(s) of performance. (absence of data is serious problem regarding development of goals/objectives).

Eighteen percent of cases had no statement specific to related services.

Sixty eight percent of cases showed no data on time spent in regular education program.

Thirty seven percent ofcases contained no reported time to be spent in special education classes.

Thirty percent of cases had no initiation/duration dates.

Thirty three percent of cases had no evaluation procedures.

Fifty seven percent of cases had no evidence of parental approval. (Schneck 1978:3)

The results of the Schneck study pointed up a need for inservice training, for clarification of content necessary to develop the IEP, and for relating diagnostics to an appropriate program.

In 1978, Alper conducted causal-comparative research using 265 IEPs from 13 school districts in California. "The Plans were evaluated by expert raters (as in the Schneck study) to determine:

1) comprehensiveness
2) specificity
3) clarity
4) extent to which the least restrictive environment was provided" (Abstract, p.1).

The results showed a wide variance in procedures used by committees. The lack of a uniform approach suggested a need for a handbook of standard operating procedures. Both long term goals and short term objectives were poorly written and specified. Only 25 percent contained a behavior situation

and criterion specification. They also lacked specification of setting and evaluation procedures. The percentages to which persons were able to implement suggestions of the IEP were: regular teachers, 59 percent; special education teachers, 93 percent. There was a high degree of relationship between degree of implementation and pupil change (R=72). After implementing, 70 percent of regular teachers and 82 percent of special education teachers were able to meet or exceed criteria set in all objective areas except oral and written language.

Implementation of the IEP involves a test-teach-test-evaluate sequence (Alper, 1978). Such conditions require the use of task analysis and instructional strategy approaches (American Alliance, 1977). Therefore, the implementors need to become data collectors (Alper, 1978). A problem is that few materials are based on task analysis of the child's problem. Also procedure materials are few that indicate how to revise a teaching program according to a child's performance (Alper, 1978). By using strategy approaches which constitute the day-to-day plans, the implementor systematically works toward achievement of the IEP goals and objectives by the child.

It is the annual review which provides feedback from the IEP after implementation. The assessment and planning team must meet annually to discuss progress and any changes to be made in the IEP. Parental or guardian consent for

changes are made at this time (Alper,1978; Weintraub et al., 1977). This review of the IEP is mandated once yearly (OSE Policy Excerpts,1979), not three times as once recommended in Senate debate, so as to not overregulate and to give state and local flexibility (National Advisory COH, 1977). The IEP need not be "reviewed and revised at the beginning of each school year. . .The basic requirement in the regulations is that IEPs must be in effect at the beginning of each school year. . .the meeting(s) may be held anytime throughout the year, including (a) at the end of. . .school year, (b) during summer. . .or (c) on anniversary date of last IEP meeting on the child" (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:22). Once a year is usually rare, as more frequent reviews give the parents a better understanding of the child's needs and problems (National Advisory COH, 1977). The OSE (1979:23) has advised that in some cases, if parents are involved. . .short-term objectives may be changed without holding an additional meeting. The conditions are that "no change can be made in any other part of the child's IEP (e.g., annual goals and the kind and amount of services)."

The local agencies will monitor the effectiveness of the IEPs and the degree to which goals and objectives for each child are achieved appropriately. (American Alliance, 1977). The state education authority (SEA) is ultimately responsible to monitor effectiveness. Specifically the SEA must monitor in cases of inter-agency problems (Schulman,1980; OSE Policy Paper, 1979).

Procedures to Develop and Monitor IEPs

As noted before, there is a wide variance in the procedures used to develop IEPs. By examining P.L. 94-142, it can clearly be seen that the law directed that each child receiving special education be provided with an IEP; yet, there is no direction in the directive regarding the methodologies for development of IEPs (Schneck, 1978). The purpose and the components are clearly stated, but the "format and length of IEPs are matters left to the discretion of state and local agencies" (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:23).

In the development and implementation of IEPs, a consideration must be made regarding the element of "not knowing;" that is, the product must be seen as "the best thinking at one point in time, . . .subject to. . .skepticism and trial. . .Eliminating the fear of bureaucratic reprisal and admitting ignorance are essential" (Kaye and Aserlind, 1979:140). Although the law almost dictates a new educational delivery system (Crisler, 1979), Kaye and Aserlind suggest that those who develop the IEP should view it with the same premise as inner tennis: "we let the ball teach us how to hit;" (p.143) that is, lessons from experience of writing, reviewing, and revising IEPs will teach effective implementation of IEPs. This is a simplistic statement for a complex process, but they are quick to point out that "The success of the IEP depends on the process of preparing a written statement describing an appropriate program for every child." (p. 143)

Key disciplines are involved in the development of the IEP, and therefore, a multi-disciplinary team approach is advocated as one alternative to meet the law (Crisler, 1979). It is interesting that Hayes and Higgins (1978:270) note that "The responsibility of the writing task itself is not federally legislated. . .This task is not necessarily a teacher responsibility. . .teacher input into district procedures. . . is desirable." On the other hand, they are careful to describe a variety of sources for teachers to consult in regard to federal, state, and local policy requirements. The sources include: professional organizations (CEC provides accurate information and interpretation); firsthand reading of P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 of P.L. 93-112 (obtained from congressperson); state special education laws and regulations; copy of local application and policy methods and procedures as required by law (obtained from special education administrator); and the state plan (obtained from state department of special education). These sources were cited to help teachers distinguish federal, state, and local requirements and to be prepared for advocating policy change or imporved implementation.

The letter of law requires the IEP be a "written statement <u>developed in any meeting</u> with the agency representative, the teacher, the parent, and the child whenever appropriate (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:23; National Advisory COH, 1977). Therefore,

> "it would not be appropriate for an agency to present a completed IEP to parents for their signature. . .it would be appropriate for agency staff to come prepared with evaluations. . .presents levels of performance. . . recommendations regarding. . .goals. . .objectives. . . and educational and related services to be provided" (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:23).

The spirit of the law may be said to involve other teachers and staff (special and regular) directly involved with a child's school experience, as well as advocates (National Advisory COH, 1977).

In contrast, Schulman (1980:25) suggested that "too many people have been involved in (IEP) preparation." He added that during the first two years, numbers of people "congregated around the IEP table" and that administrators must have equated effectiveness with more participants. Hayes and Higgins, (1978:270) concurred that the "results too frequently find a cadre of people assembled including health care personnel, psychologists, social workers, administrators, each teacher that works with the child, and the parents. In the case of secondary level students they advocate that teachers who have primary responsibility for implementation be given priority. Schulman (1980:25) concluded that OSE clarifications of the law "indicate a wish not to overwhelm the parents." He stated that parents are more likely to contribute to the meeting if it is small.

Nevertheless, the requirements for the IEP meeting (or conference) do seem to indicate a need for a team approach (Crisler, 1979; Reynolds, 1977). The direct implications of the law is that a combination of services and personnel is

more effective in meeting the needs of handicapped children (U.S. Senate Report No. 168, 1975). Crisler (1979:102) reported that training is necessary to prepare personnel to integrate their efforts; yet, there exists "no systematic training process for personnel who must integrate expertise in special services into a comprehensive unified plan in order for the system to provide a total approach to the needs of the handicapped child in educational programs." He added that a handicapped student should not have to "bear the burden of fragmentation of services and programs." Haselkorn (1956) advocated interprofessional collaboration, but also pointed out that lack of training in this area was a barrier to team approach effectiveness. He noted that most professionals are geared to their specialization with a need to protect their professional identity at all costs.

Regarding team functioning, Crisler (1979) found very little evidence to indicate success in the past, and little experimental research available on effectiveness of the team; even though the literature claims the value of team practice. Therefore, he proposed a format to implement an integrated team concept. He recommended the team composition to include all staff who have face-to-face educational responsibility to a common student, in contrast to Schulman. In his training program, Crisler suggested that parents be part of the initial team meeting to share "perceptions of the handicapping condition, educational

educational problems, and goals of the student" (p.104). The parents' descriptions serve to highlight and clarify the nature of the student's problem. Next, parents should be included then with responsibility for certain aspects of the program to insure their full participation, commitment and involvement. Following the initial team meeting, additional information, assessments, and observations should be completed before the finalized IEP is established. Last, the team should meet again to review the results to finalize the objectives of the IEP.

Turnbull, Strickland, and Hammer (1978) recommended a small group or subcommittee to develop goals and objectives more efficiently for developing useful IEPs. In their procedure, a full committee meets initially to discuss major issues. The subcommittee, then, has full authority to write the IEP, but the IEP must go back to the full committee for final approval. A central IEP coordinator in the system should spot-check IEPs in the initial stages. If teachers are writing objectives which are too specific or too sketchy, changes can be made before "bad habits are established" (p.58). All procedures and guidelines are not interpreted the same way by all faculty; therefore,these researchers insist that clarification, and reclarification is needed for prevention of bad habits.

The parents, indeed, are an important part of the development of the IEP. The law specifies that all persons with information about the child should have input in

making decisions (Crawford, 1978). The parents are specifically named to attend meetings, along with the teacher, and the agency representative. The OSE (1979:22) elaborates on these members, saying that the agency representative may be any "member of the school staff, other than the child's teacher, who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children." Examples cited are: "qualified special education administrator supervisor, or teacher (including a speech-language pathologist); a school principal or administrator qualified to supervise special education." Two considerations are: first, the representative should have the "authority to commit resources" and second, should be chosen in terms of the "nature and severity of a child's handicap." The OSE continues that "parents. . .are expected to be equal participants, along with school personnel, in developing, reviewing, and revising the child's IEP." . . . parents should "(1) participate in discussion. . .and (2) join with other participants in deciding what services the agency will provide."

Crisler (1979:104) adds that it only makes sense that the parent be included in team composition because if the parents are involved and responsible for decision making and planning in the inception, "litigation and controversy will be minimized as part of this process." Few surprises will occur in developing the IEP if teachers and

parent work together from the point of referral (Hayes and Higgins, 1978).

Regarding the IEP, parents have rights. "No IEP can be written without the parents' consent." (Schulman, 1980:26). The law mandates parents' rights to participate in all decisions about a child's educational program; consequently, parents have a right to state what they believe to be proper for their child's educational needs (Crawford, 1978). Due process entitles parents to a hearing if they do not agree with the written IEP (P.L. 94-142, Hayes and Higgins, 1978; Crawford, 1978). It is worth noting that if school or parents disagree with placement or program, either has this right (Geiser, 1979). In cases of such appeals, the child "remains in the current placement until a decision is rendered as to the appropriate program for the child" (Hayes and Higgins, 1978:269).

Because due process procedures are time-consuming and costly, and hard feelings may create parent/school adversaries and an unacceptable climate for a child's learning, Geiser (1979) proposed a training program for professional special educators and social workers to become mediators. These mediators could resolve differences without the costs of a hearing.

Parents might "elect to bring another participant to the meetins, e.g., a friend or neighbor, someone outside of the agency who knows the law and is familiar with the child's needs, or a specialist who conducted an independent

evaluation of the child" (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979:22; Dougherty, 1979). In one case history, parents of a twelve year-old learning disabled girl felt that they had no sense of whether their child had made progress during the first year that IEPs were used in her school (M.J.S., 1979). They reportedly felt "railroaded" into the plan and felt that the social skill objectives were not a high priority for the child. They also felt that goals had not been attained and that the plan was a failure. However, with an advocate (author of study, M.J.S.), these parents agreed to sign the plan for the coming year, and were able to express their concerns and make contributions.

The team must reach agreement that a program is appropriate to needs and reasonable (Crawford, 1978). Dexter (1978) offered suggestions on how to involve parents and maintain their interest and support. She listed "do's" regarding how to understand parent viewpoint, how to listen, and how to encourage home documentation or assignments. Among the dont's she listed: don't use professional jargon, don't underestimate the parent, and don't let frustrations interfere. Her guidelines would be helpful to teams for fostering effective parent participation.

Crawford (1978) synthesized many suggestions by various disciplines to make recommendations for the parents' role. Concerning diagnostic evaluation, she described in detail how parents should: investigate services; consider outside evaluations; communicate to the classroom teacher;

be involved with evaluator ("pertinent information provided by the parent can be crucial to the final analysis" p.3); tests and special considerations for testing.

Concerning development of the IEP, Crawford recommended that parents: attend all meetings; gather all documented information (check school records); bring an advocate (organization, professional, etc.); prepare a list of items for part of the curriculum; discuss relevant information as the child's advocate. The law requires open reviews on all data on children (Reynolds, 1977). Crawford brought attention to the fact that services should be based on need, not handicap or environment. The OSE (1980:23) makes it clear that "the IEP is a commitment to provide services" and that "all services in the IEP must be provided in order for the agency to be in compliance with the Act." Crawford further stated that parents should thoroughly understand the program as written and should agree upon goals as clear-cut and measurable.

Concerning the total child, Crawford continued that parents know and should consider the talents, the vocational needs, the enrichment and fine arts needs. Afterward, they should attend regular scheduled conferences and expect at least one formal evaluation per year according to child's need. Crawford summarized that the process should guarantee parents an opportunity to offer observations, suggestions, to evaluate and monitor a child's progress.

Similarly, Geiser (1979:15) stated that parents should ask "What does that mean (jargon?) and how do you intend to

go about that?" If members "can't tell. . .they shouldn't be doing it." Geiser recommended that parents insist on review of each objective, a check if they were met, and an explanation if they were not.

Scheduling of conferences necessitates a mutually agreed time and place (American Alliance, 1977). "To gain full parent participation, school administrators must use a policy of flexible response to meet the parents' available time - this is written into the mandates" (Washick, 1978:34). By law, the parents must be notified early enough to enable them to plan for attending (American Alliance, 1977; Reynolds, 1977). If the parents can't attend, other methods must be used such as individual or conference telephone calls (American Alliance 1977; Dougherty 1979).

> "An IEP conference may be conducted without the parents but documentations must be available to indicate every possible effort was made to include the parents such as: detailed records of all telephone calls, copies of all correspondence sent and received, and detailed accounts of personal visits to the home or places of employment... If they choose not to participate, they should receive a letter summarizing the conference and expressing regrets that they could not attend" (Dougherty, 1979:51).
>
> Merely sending the IEP home for parent signature does not meet the legal requirements. (Goldstein, et al., 1980).

In their observational analysis of the IEP conference, Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull, and Curry (1989:279-285) recognized that the "parent-professional alliance is still in an early stage of development." Their review of the literature confirmed that parent participation has a positive effect on student achievement, and that parent involvement

has brought about positive change in parent attitudes. The study was an analysis of parent-professional interaction that is occurring in IEP development.

In the 14 conferences observed, 3.7 was the mean number of participants. According to the Rules and Regulations for P.L. 94-142, only 5 of the 14 conferences were legally constituted. In the 9 without full representation, "The missing participant was the representative of the public agency. . .responsible for providing or supervising special education." Mean length of conferences was 36 minutes, with a range of 6 to 72 minutes. The mention of legal rights of parents was glossed over and not always cited. In a ranking of topics discussed, curriculum and behavior topped the list with 20 percent and 14 percent, respectively, of total citation. In communication, "the resource teacher was observed talking more than twice as much as the parent; in two conferences, parents (both fathers) spoke the most." Typically, the professional. . .speaking directed comments to the parent to the exclusion of other professionals who were present. (p. 283)

The researchers were disturbed to find that regular classroom teachers were present at fewer than half of the conferences. Since the resource teacher was the reviewer of the already developed IEP, the question was raised whether or not such an IEP reflects the special education rather than total curriculum. The study also projected that parents may prefer to review rather than actively develop

the IEP: preferences should be recognized. As parents often made no request for services that would have been appropriate, a need for a systematic training program for parent involvement is implied.

Teachers have asked how to involve parents whom they can't even get to come to school. In response, Marion (1979) developed a systematic model approach to foster minority parent participation. He provided specific guidelines in phoning, written and verbal communication, and home visits.

Another problem with the team approach is that this process requires behaviors and strategies not regularly used by schools and educators, as contended by Kaye and Aserlind (1979:141). They added that "planning in isolation from others, by teachers or administrators, is the rule rather than the exception." They also found that meetings are often viewed as one-shot decisions, and that "effective and rewarding parental participation has rarely been achieved." The process must be "nurtured" they concluded, to build "linkages" through sharing and planning time. (p. 141)

The IEP as a product may be developed by a wide variety of procedures. However, the lack of uniform approach has suggested a need for a handbook of standard operating procedures (Alper, 1978). Alper recommended handbooks by Stephens (1977-78) and the STEP Program (Cajon Valley, 1977) for useful training in writing short-term objectives. Crandall (1979:1) prefaced a handbook by the Mid-east Regional Resource Center, saying,

1. The purpose of IEPs is <u>not</u> to cause teachers to "wade through paper."

2. IEPs do not have to be "pages and pages of detailed writing."

3. All of the good things you (teachers) have been doing for children are needed in implementing any program.

The OSE (1979:23) concurred that the IEP should be "as long as necessary" but "the federal IEP requirements can usually be met in a one-to-three-page form." A national survey through BEH indicated that 47 percent of the IEPs reviewed were three pages or less in length (OSE Policy Excerpts, 1979). Schulman (1980) commented that the OSE policy suggests that IEPs have been unnecessarily lengthy.

Geiser (1979) found that for most schools, P.L. 94-142 initially created a profusion of paperwork; however, most systems now have developed standard forms for writing IEPs in order to control the paperwork.

The results of Project IEP, discussed earlier, indicated that "local flexibility in meeting local needs was stressed" and that "state standardization of the IEP form was <u>not</u> seen as increasing the effectiveness and efficiency." (Kaye and Aserlind, 1979:143).

In the Mideast Regional handbook (1979), an overview is described of Public Law 94-142, components of an IEP, the exceptionalities assessment (purpose, terms, extracting data for goals), goals and objectives (examples of behavioral objective, task analysis), media materials, instruction strategy reevaluation techniques and processes, parent input,

and appendix of tests, checklists, and inventories. The handbook appears to be a complete and excellent source.

Mazzulo (1979) designed a plan to develop an IEP by outlining steps in planning and how to limit the scope of the components. Phase I of the plan is determining priority goals and services, while Phase II describes the sequence of sharing and stating each specific area of IEP development. A sample IEP is included.

Fineblum (1979) submitted an IEP System Plan which included: sample record sheets for recording strengths and weaknesses; developmental skills within a domain coded for consistent use in the IEP and updating. The process is a four-step outline from coding weaknesses to selecting objectives and annual updating. The process is designed to assure economy while safeguarding individualization.

Armstrong (1978) introduced a management system which included an expectancy formula for Educable Mentally Retarded and Learning Disabled children, a teacher-training component, and forms and procedures to implement and evaluate the process. The system was used for 200 IEPs (for educable mentally retarded and learning disabled children) to be developed and monitored in Coffee County, Georgia. Analysis of achievement showed for the handicapped children who had not received an individualized program prior to the IEP statistically significant gains in reading and mathematics. The direct cost of the management program was minimal and the most crucial factor

in the effort was allocation of time. Analysis of monitoring (rating scales) suggested that teachers mastered development of IEP according to procedures over 80 percent criterion. Although the majority of teachers continued to teach without completing diagnostic and written prescriptions, the strategy of IEPs insured an awareness of needs and a plan to meet them.

Other sources for training are available. The National Education Association (1978) has developed a Multimedia Inservice Training Program for parents and teachers which includes a learning module, a teacher manual, and film strips. The same association (1979) also has developed an inservice materials workshop which includes a one-hour parent awareness workshop and a three-hour workshop for educators and administrators using cassettes, filmstrips, discussion, and a leader text.

Through a Bureau of Education contract, the Midwest Regional Resource Center (1978) designed a 2-day staff development workshop on the IEP process with an activity based format. It includes a list of other primers, handbooks, manuals and resource guides available.

Preservice for regular teachers is also a needed area of training. Kleinhammer (1978) designed such a program consisting of instructional modules that were field tested. The purpose is to integrate "least restrictive environment" content into regular education to enhance appreciation for teaching mildly handicapped children. The modules include

classroom layout, scheduling, developing and using the IEP, and planning instruction. Hohn (1978) also developed a pre-service instructional module, field tested, intended to supply basic information about exceptional and normal children, assessment procedures, theories of learning, and behavioral objectives.

Some models are available for developing the IEP for a specific handicapping condition. An example is an IEP Assessment Model by Rotatori, Galloway, and Rotatori (1980) for identifying minimally essential data components in formulating IEPs of the mildly retarded. The seven data components for assessments are: intellectual, developmental, adaptive, vocational, academic, reinforcement hierarchy, and behavioral. Another example is a strategy investigated by Hedbring and Rubenzer (1979) for integrating the IEP and J. Guilford's Structure-of-Intellect (S.O.I.) to promote accountability based on differentiated programming for the gifted classroom student.

Role of the Special Education Teacher

Still there is much confusion on who implements the IEP, how it is implemented and what accountability is involved (Geiser, 1979). Since the Special Education teacher has been identified as the person most appropriately involved in prescriptive aspects of the IEP planning process (Fenton, Yoshida, Maxwell and Kaufman 1977), implementation of individualized educational programs can be expected to

particularly change the role or job requirements of the special education teacher (Safer, 1978). The teacher is required to attend the IEP conferences (OSE Policy Paper, 1979; Washick, 1978). When Turnbull (1978) discussed that a central IEP coordinator should spot-check to see if teachers are writing objectives correctly, the writer of the IEP is the teacher. In the analysis of parent conferences, Goldstein and others (1980:274) noted implications that the "resource teacher assumes primary responsibility not only for the IEP conference but also for the development and implementation of the IEP." Similarly, much of the literature specifies or refers to the teacher as the primary person in regard to development and implementation of IEPs (Safer, 1978; Carpenter, 1979; Alper, 1978; Bensky et al., 1980; Reynolds 1977; Marion, 1979; Crandall, 1979; Armstrong, 1978).

Carpenter (1979:308) surveyed teachers, special education directors and parents in Indiana regarding their perceptions of P.L. 94-142. Results showed that "Teachers felt most knowledgeable in the areas of IEPs, case conference procedures, age limits, and annual review requirements, in that order." A bare majority felt <u>confident</u> only in the IEP out of 14 areas specified. Teachers felt least knowledgeable in areas outside of the classroom, such as noncompliance, due process, funding, and agency monitoring.

The implementation must play a very creative role in applying the clinical teaching model (Learner, 1976; Alper, 1978). Safer (1978:4-5) added that "much creative thinking

should be devoted to determining a wide range of viable instructional options for providing individualized educational programming." That statement referred to a need to structure an IEP process that is not only in compliance, but also "relevant to teachers with differing beliefs and styles." An example cited by Safer was that of a teacher with a Piagetian style who wants to move a child from one cognitive stage to another. Determining the current level of performance and how to progress and evaluate would be useful to this teacher. However, "highly specific objectives and quantitative criteria may not be as useful as. . .less specific objectives and some qualitative signs as criteria." Also, "frequent measurement actually may interfere with the type of learning environment the teacher is trying to establish." Safer concluded that the teacher may feel that he or she is wasting time planning and recording, possibly resulting in frustration and low morale.

The teacher's beliefs and style then, are important aspects of creative individualized programming. Teaching a group lesson at several different levels (such as expecting some children to name materials to increase vocabulary while expecting others to express complete sentences and utilizing work stations with individual assignments are examples of options for individualizing instruction in the classroom (Safer, 1978). Safer pointed out that "individualized education is not synonymous with individual education." (p.18).

Since teachers devalue and resent noninstructional

activities such as clerical duties because it detracts from potentially productive instructional time, and because the rewards of teaching are psychic, three roles changes which teachers view particularly negatively may create dissatisfaction and rapid turnover. (Lortie, 1975). They are:

1) less time for instruction of children because of increased noninstructional tasks

2) shared responsibility for classroom activities

3) increased accountability to outsiders. (Lortie, 1975).

Project IEP, as mentioned before, was designed to clarify perceptions of roles in the IEP process. Safer (1978) reported that open-ended interview procedures were used in 31 districts of four states (Alabama, New Jersey, Washington, Wisconsin). The results indicated that teachers in one group were unanimous in belief that a decrease in teacher contact time would be harmful for student learning. An area of concern was that they might not have skills necessary to carry out all tasks and that they might need training. Teachers confirmed that the impact of implementation of the IEP would change the nature of role as teacher from providers of instruction to instructional managers. Teachers believed that in-service training is an integral part of special education programs and that support in resources is critical (such as assessment systems, sequences of objectives, cross-referenced materials to objectives, standard forms, and classroom aides). Regarding concern for additional noninstructional planning tasks, teachers feared they saw no alternative to

cutting instructional time in order to carry it out.

Teachers are indeed changing roles and responsibilities in special education as a result of Public Law 94-142. Hayes and Higgins (1978) pointed out some aspects of this changing role. Teachers must be child advocates above all, and work to make the system responsive with appropriate committed resources rather than resources available. Teachers must be "informed, knowledgeable, and responsible to be sure they are contributing to the free, appropriate public education that each handicapped child is now guaranteed." They must be involved in IEP development as well as when the IEP is appealed by due process procedures. They must be qualified and competent; so they must have input into relevant inservice training (Hayes and Higgins, 1978:271).

Accountability is an area of concern. The IEP is a management tool and is a commitment of specific resources by the education agency, but P.L. 94-142 does <u>not</u> require that any teacher or person be held accountable if a child does not achieve the growth projected in the IEP (OSE,1979; Hayes and Higgins 1978). Schulman (1980) has said that the OSE indicated that the plan is not a contract. But he mentioned that in some states, this plan has the meaning of a legal contract, as in Massachusetts. Accountability continues to be an area of contention, since good efforts are expected by law and a parent has the "right to complain and ask for revision of the child's program, or to invoke due process procedures, if the parent feels that these efforts are not

being made (Public Law 94-142, Final Regulations, Sec. 12a 344, 1977).

It is evident that teachers have a great deal of responsibility in the IEP process. Therefore it is fitting that Bensky and others (1980) studied among other issues: "Is there a relationship between 94-142 and teacher stress?" Considering that a significant elaboration of job responsibilities in a domain may serve to increase job-related stress, and in turn may decrease satisfaction, they found a justification to investigate the effects of the Public Law 94-142 mandates. Also, there is a limited amount of research in the area of Public Law 94-142, Special Education, and teacher stress.

On the basis of a questionnaire, the special classroom teacher was found to be under less stress than resource and regular classroom teachers. In the special classroom, responsibilities for implementation, placement, and due process mandates are limited. However, resource teachers are now heavily involved in educational diagnosis, placement team meetings, writing and monitoring IEPs, consulting, and handling due process paperwork in addition to providing direct service to handicapped students. The results of the study implied the following:

1. Many aspects of the law are creating stress for educators.

2. Clear role expectation and the frequency of Public Law 94-142 compliance by school systems can be stress factors.

3. There are various stress conditions related to the law that are impinging on educators. (Bensky et al, 1980:28).

The recommendations made were : comprehensive inservice staff development plans that are global, a major effort focusing on the definition, and clarification of roles within the plan process.

Stress factors, then, are involved to a varying degree in special education teaching. Dougherty (1979:52-53) has noted also some implications for the school principal in the implementation of IEPs. First, the principal "must be aware of the effects of mainstreaming upon all the people involved with such a program. The teachers in particular, "must receive intensive and practical developmental assistance if they are to instruct the handicapped child." Also, the "class size should be kept small enough that the teacher does not feel guilty about the amount of time spent with one child or a small group of children." Last, "the teachers must be given time during the school day to attend IEP conferences, plan classes and lessons, talk with parents, etc." These essentials must be provided for successful mainstreaming. "Not to do so," said Dougherty, "spells disaster." In the Project IEP survey (Safer, 1979), two special education directors stated they had "avoided the need for additional (teacher) training to a great extent by careful hiring practices during the past few years," taking advantage of extensive university training in diagnostic-prescriptive teaching.

The regular classroom teacher also has a role in implementing IEPs. Reynolds (1977) suggested emphasis on direct, domain oriented assessments which teachers do themselves. He outlined steps whereby a teacher recognizes progress or adjustment problems, assesses knowledge and skills, prepares specific instructional objectives (parents should concur), selects materials and procedures to fit the basic skill levels and needs, carries out instruction, and applies prepared criterion-referenced tests and evaluations (self-testing as much as possible). The teacher should be flexible with objectives, and repeat instruction with alternative methods if necessary. If this instruction is not working, then a special education teacher can be consulted to help analyze the problem and possibly help in instruction. Reynolds reminded regular teachers that the purpose of such a sequence is "to design an individualized education program, one that states the specific education and the related services to be provided to the child" (p. 125). Thus, Reynolds has advocated direct assessment and planning in the domain of instruction before indirect procedures are deemed necessary. An IEP in the regular classroom is the result of the sequence.

The Issue of Time

The issue of time is mentioned or discussed in a large majority of the literature. Geiser (1979) referred to a "tyranny of paperwork" created by Public Law 94-142.

Advocating a team approach, Crisler (1979:101) stated, "The amount of time and effort needed to develop and to objectively write an IEP for each handicapped child. . .is enormous, particularly in the first few years of implementation of Public Law 94-142." Turnbull, Strickland, and Hammer, (1978:54058) also favored small group approach "since developing goals and specifying objectives in a sequential fashion is tedious and time consuming." They also commented that the IEP can be viewed as a "burden of more paperwork or an opportunity to improve the quality of education." Yet, the paperwork remains to be done regardless of the viewpoint taken.

When the IEPs were about to be implemented as mandated in 1977, potential problems were that some staff members could contend that they did not have time to get involved in IEPs, or some might prepare them casually and then pay no attention to them (National Advisory COH, 1977). However, Fineblum (1979:1) noted that "teams of diagnosticians, specialists, teachers and parents jointly generating plans are attempting to comply with both the letter and spirit of the prevailing legislation." Yet, "the constraints of time, staff 'freezes,' referrals, and local factors deter them from the usual intended proficiency level."

The IEP is a "time-consuming child assessment tool designed to bring uniformity to special education programming" (Washick 1978:34). It was a known fact in 1977 that "preparing IEPs will command special amounts of time for the teacher and

other members of the planning team," and that the teacher would be involved in content development and setting up conferences for time, place and persons (National Advisory COH, 1977:7).

Most teachers agree to the importance of IEPs (Heisner 1 979), but Stoughton Watts, principal in Pennsylvania, has suggested IEPS for <u>every</u> child to allow teachers and parents to share how a child is progressing, the goals, and plans to reach him. He said that parents are demanding it anyway. Here again, Heisner raised the question of time. When would teachers get all this done (a suggested four or five IEPs to accomodate 27-30 children)? Obviously, he concluded, time is going to have to be given for drawing up IEPs and for training, with paperwork and red tape kept to a minimum. Even development of one IEP for a child with problems by a regular teacher (described earlier by Reynolds, 1977) involves a time-consuming sequence of steps.

Of particular concern, however, is the special education teacher and the issue of time. Safer (1978:17-19) reported that information from Project IEP suggested a basic issue of "inordinate demands on teacher time that seems to be a general function of special education," beyond the time demands of IEP development. Safer conjectured that IEP implementation may have become a focal point for concern about time and dissatisfaction that possibly existed beforehand.

Another issue that became prominent in Project IEP was "the amount of time and energy that can justly be demanded of special education teachers without compensation." Safer raised a related question: ". . .can any system of teaching be valid if it is at the expense of special education teachers?" Along the lines of this issue were concerns expressed that "teacher 'burn-out' is becoming an increasing problem in special education because of the greater time demands placed on special education teachers" (Safer, 1978:15-16). Since successful individualized education programming depends a great deal on the "good will and dedication of special education teachers," Safer cautioned that the phenomenon of "burn-out" should not be treated lightly, and that a turnover of teachers every three to five years is a waste of training and valuable experience. Also, the effects on students of "burned-out" teachers could be a disturbing consequence.

Teachers also expressed concern for personal time. No figures were gathered in the four states initially, but teachers suggested they were spending considerably more time than their contract called for. Safer said that previous surveys had indicated that teachers could easily be spending 50 hours or more per week on instructionally related tasks. Their fears were that infringement on personal time would be at the expense of families, professional development, and outside interests. Already spending long hours in preparation developing materials, and keeping records, they were afraid that

assessments, writing goals and objectives, coordinating with other professionals, meeting with parents, and keeping detailed records of progress would mean increased commitment of personal time to fulfill teaching responsibilities.

Most teachers in the second group of districts in Project IEP confirmed heavy time commitment required in developing and implementing IEPs (Safer, 1978:15). In three of the districts, the estimated hours per week spent in job-related activites ranged from 55 to 67 hours. This time was spent before and after the instructional day developing materials, writing objectives, keeping records, conferring and assessing.

Regarding the length of time usually required to complete an IEP, these teachers estimated 5 to 6½ hours for a new referral and 2 to 4 hours for a current student. On new referrals they spent 2 to 4 hours assessing, 1 to 2 hours writing goals and objectives, ½ hour arranging the conference and 1 to 1½ hours in the IEP conference. In reviewing current students, they may spend up to 2 hours assessing, ½ hour writing goals and objectives, ½ hour arranging the conference and 1 hour in conference. None of the teachers in this group received any compensation for hours beyond contract time. These teachers were very much in support of individualized data-based instruction, but spoke of frustration and discouragement about the time required.

In comparison, Safer gave an example of a National Education Association survey in 1975 that indicated

elementary education teachers worked an average of 46.5 hours per week. Principals and directors of special education in the Project IEP survey (1977) tended to confirm that special education teachers do work longer hours than regular education teachers. Safer found it hardly surprising that special educators were concerned about added time-consuming responsibilities.

The time devoted to developing an IEP can vary according to grade level, type of handicap, local procedures, and whether the student is a new referral or current special education student (Safer, 1978). In a survey by Davis in 1977, the median time for collecting data and writing an IEP for each preschool handicapped child was 5.0 hours. The average was 10.9. This number "multiplied by the number of children in a special education resource or self-contained class results in a considerable number of potential hours (Safer, 1978:15).

The issue of time presents a number of problems. "How to get sufficient time? How to use time efficiently? and How to justify the amount of time needed?" were questions raised by Kaye and Aserlind (1979:142) on the IEP process. "Only when time for planning is provided. . .professional development assured. . .and when labor is recognized as important" they reasoned, would the IEP be perceived as valuable.

Using time more efficiently, Schulman (1980:25) believes, is the purpose of the OSE Policy Paper suggestion

that an IEP be a one-to-three-page document. He speculated that the clarifications imply that "time has been poorly used in preparing the IEP. . ." (since)". . . IEPs have been unnecessarily lengthy and that too many people have been involved. "Teachers are cautioned to be aware of requirements to avoid being "trapped into documenting too much information" (Hayes and Higgins 1978:269).

Similarly, Fineblum (1979:1) stated the premise of the technique for a well-run workshop: "Where the gap between steps of IEP planning are reduced, efficiency of the product increases. A time and energy economy occurs with the efficiency." She prefaced this statement by admitting that the real issue-time- accompanies the professional back to his job overload. Likewise, Armstrong (1978) found that the most crucial factor in the effort of a management system was allocation of time.

A recommendation to provide time for IEP development is suggested throughout the literature. Proposed remedies are: Use teacher "free period" time for conferences, or substitute the two times (Washick, 1978); allow compensating time off (Washick, 1978; Safer, 1978); provide support staff to assist or hire specialists to relieve special education teachers with free periods (Reynolds, 1977; Safer, 1978; Nation Advisory COH, 1977; Dougherty, 1979, Heisner, 1979; Shanker,1980); provide aides, readers, interpreters or volunteers to assist regular classroom teachers (Reynolds, 1977); allow overtime pay or a combination of compensatory

time and overtime pay (Washick, 1978); moving to a twelve-month contract for special education teachers (Safer, 1978); convert current in-service training days for conference days or create conference days as part of contract negotiations (Washick, 1978; National Advisory COH, 1977); design forms, procedures, and support systems that facilitate tasks of the teacher (Safer,1978). Since fiscal commitments are required in many of these remedies, the latter suggestion was found to be a primary attempt used by directors interviewed in Project IEP (Safer, 1978). Interestingly, the one district whose teachers were most enthusiastic, satisfied, and felt time demands were reasonable, had developed a cross-referenced system of assessment-objectives-materials (Safer, 1978).An implementation strategy and support system gave evidence of a cumulative effect on teacher morale and satisfaction (Safer, 1978).

Finally, this looming issue of time for developing IEPs has created a concern for the effect it has on the child and actual instructional time. "School personnel often feel that they are so busy writing plans that they have little time left to work with children" (Geiser,1979:14). "Staff allocations are going to have to be made to accomodate planning conferences and activities to make sure children's schooling does not come to an abrupt halt because the staff is buried in writing IEPs" (National Advisory COH, 1977).

Future Research

Shanker (1980:52) has spoken out on the issue of time: "Teachers complain they have no time left to teach." He cited the example of a speech and hearing therapist with 125 students who would be responsible for 125 contacts, 125 planning meetings, and preparation of 125 IEPs." He claimed that in the past school year (1979-80), many such teachers had not begun to teach as late as February. "Immediate research is needed", he added, "on whether IEPs as defined under the law, actually enhance a child's education or work to prevent it." (p. 52)

A need for future research has also been indicated in a number of areas regarding development of IEPs. Geiser (1979) questioned how regular curriculums should be modified for special needs children. In 1977, Johnson and Ruskin observed a need for more within-subject design studies to evaluate procedures for individualized instruction. They reasoned that previous studies have been between-group designs but that taking repeated measures of performance by within-subject design could provide a wealth of additional information. Further research and replication of observational analyses are needed to "more clearly delineate the extent and nature of parental involvement in the IEP conference" (Goldstein, et al., 1980: 284). Also needed are more survey data studies on parental satisfaction with IEP conferences; and, research is needed on whether IEPs are a reflection of

special education by the way they are developed, rather than a reflection of the child's total curriculum (Goldstein, et al., 1980).

Safer (1978) pointed out a need to explore the IEP process to find ways to accommodate state and federal regulations and to be relevant to teachers with varying styles and beliefs. Also needed is more evidence that behavioral date-based orientation to planning and instruction results in greater achievement for handicapped (Safer,1978). Research is needed to differentiate between reported and real stress and its relationship to Public Law 94-142. In the same category, intervention and change strategies are needed to focus on specific job characteristics that are debilitating: separate or related to components of the law. (Bensky, Shaw, Gouse, Bates, Dixon and Beane,1980).

Shanker (1980) has advocated more study on how the mandatory teacher participant in the IEP conference is being interpreted from one school system to another. That is, is the teacher special education, regular, past, current, or a combination? Also, is the person a reasonable participant for relevant planning? Shanker stated that many more questions need to be investigated regarding IEPs, including the effect and extent, if any, of an IEP locking a child and teacher into a particular program.(Carpenter, in 1979, found no evidence that teachers felt locked into a regimen, diminishing creative and spontaneous teaching.)

Conclusion

It appears that the IEP is continuing to inspire controversial issues. However, many of the issues that arise are in some way affected by the problem of time. Time is mentioned, or indirectly referred to, by nearly every article or study that has been done on this gentle, but all-important document for every handicapped child. Most teachers agree to the importance of an IEP, but many are concerned about the time-consuming tasks that are often infringing upon personal time. Only two prominent studies (Davis, 1977; Project IEP: Kaye and Aserlind, 1979 and Safer, 1978) investigated how much time was being devoted to developing IEPs; and these were during the first year that teachers were tackling a then, new and confusing process. Therefore, current research is needed to ascertain how much time teachers are now spending on developing IEPs after IEPs have been in effect for four years, and since most teachers are more familiar with the IEP process. Also, since some researchers are questioning the effect of time used to develop IEPs upon instructional time, such research should be designed so that implications may be drawn in regard to this effect upon instructional time. The relevance of IEPs to student achievement and teaching efficiency is being challenged. Thus, the premise of this study is to investigate how much time teachers are using now to develop IEPs, and to discover any implications regarding how much instructional time is lost during the process.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Description of Research Design

To address the problem of how much time teachers are spending on the development of IEPs, descriptive research was conducted using a questionnaire investigation. The questionnaire was distributed by hand to subjects at the beginning of a graduate level class meeting at 5:00 P.M. over a three-week period, October/November, 1980. The questionnaires were collected by hand after each subject had completed the questionnaire. Nine classes were visited..

Sampling Procedures

In order to survey subjects who were teaching in a variety of locations, types of teaching positions, and handicapping conditions, the sample population consisted of teachers or other professionals serving children who were attending special education graduate courses at the State University of New York at New Paltz and who were currently responsible for IEPs (1980-81 school year). Convenient sampling procedures were accomplished by asking for a show of hands by those who met that criteria. The total sample population numbered forty-four.

Data Gathering Instrument

A three-page questionnaire was developed and is included in the Appendix. Questions were designed to gain information on characteristics of the individual teacher being surveyed, content of their IEPs, time spent on IEP development and writing, and the amount of instructional time devoted to IEP development. A rating scale was also included to secure information on IEP conference methods used and on the ways individual teachers and schools are handling the time demands of IEPs.

Statistical Treatment

Analysis of the data collected was accomplished by using central tendency measures and by presenting some of the results in terms of percentages. The results appear in Tables and Figures included in Chapter 4 of the study.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Type of Teaching Position

Since some teachers are spending more time on IEPs than others, teachers were asked to mark what kind of classroom position they held. This information was used to compare the responses of the resulting groups.

Here is the question:

> What type of teaching position do you presently hold?

Table 1

Position	No.	%
regular classroom	1	2.27
special education self-contained	25	56.82
resource	11	25.00
therapist, counselor, or other	7	15.91

The figures show that self-contained teachers were heavily represented totaling 56.82% of all respondents, while regular classroom teachers were represented by only one person or 2.27%.

Answering to type of handicapping condition, the responses showed that a wide variety of handicapping conditions were represented in the study. However, handicapping conditions were so varied, numerous, and often multiple that they were not used for grouping purposes.

The teachers indicated the classroom levels taught, which are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Level	No.	%
preschool	10	11.36
elementary	12	27.27
middle	7	15.90
secondary	10	22.73

The levels taught were shown to be fairly evenly represented, with elementary level cited most at 27.27% of all respondents.

Number of Years Teaching

Experience in any job, as well as teaching, can mean improved efficiency in work habits. To see if teaching experience influences the time teachers spend on IEPs, teachers were asked to answer the question:

> Counting this year, how many years have you been teaching or professionally employed in direct service to students?

Table 3

Experience	No.	%
1 year	10	22.73
2 to 4 years	14	31.82
5 to 10 years	9	20.45
11 or more years	11	25.00

Experience was fairly evenly represented, with 2 to 4 years experience cited most by 31.82% of teachers, as presented in Table 3.

Regarding the number of years experience in developing IEPs, teachers were asked:

> How many years have you been responsible for the development of one or more Individualized Education Plans, as mandated October, 1977, by Public Law 94-142?

Table 4

Experience at IEPs	No.	%
1 year	10	22.73
2 years	14	31.82
3 years	9	20.45
4 years	11	25.00

The experience range was listed up to four years, since the IEP mandate has been in effect through four school years. Again, the experience was fairly evenly represented, with 31.82% of the teachers having two years experience. The information was useful for comparing time amounts used to develop IEPs, discussed later.

Kind of Training

The type of training a teacher has received, or not received, could also influence the amount of time spent on developing IEPs. For that reason teachers were asked:

> What kind of training have you received regarding developing of IEPs? (mark all that apply)

Table 5

Training	Regular	Resource	Self cont.	Other	Total	%
undergraduate and/or graduate training	-	8	19	3	30	68.18
inservice	-	2	9	6	17	38.64
seminars conferences	-	4	8	3	15	34.09
no specialized training	1	4	3	1	9	20.45
other	-	0	3	0	3	6.82

(figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers).

The information in Table 5 shows that a high percentage of the teachers had received specialized training in one or more of the types listed. A moderate 20.45% indicated they had no specialized training, while 6.82% wrote in "talking with supervisor" and "discussing with other teachers" as other means of training.

Number of IEPs

A teacher who is responsible for a few IEPs may be able to spend more time on each IEP than the teacher who is responsible for many IEPs.

The question:

How many IEPs are you presently responsible for?

Table 6

Teacher(s)	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	12*	-	-	-
resource	16.91	15	12,20	3-32
self-contained	12.67	9	7	5-42
other	33.29	10	5	2-120
total	15.57	12	5,7,12,20	2-120

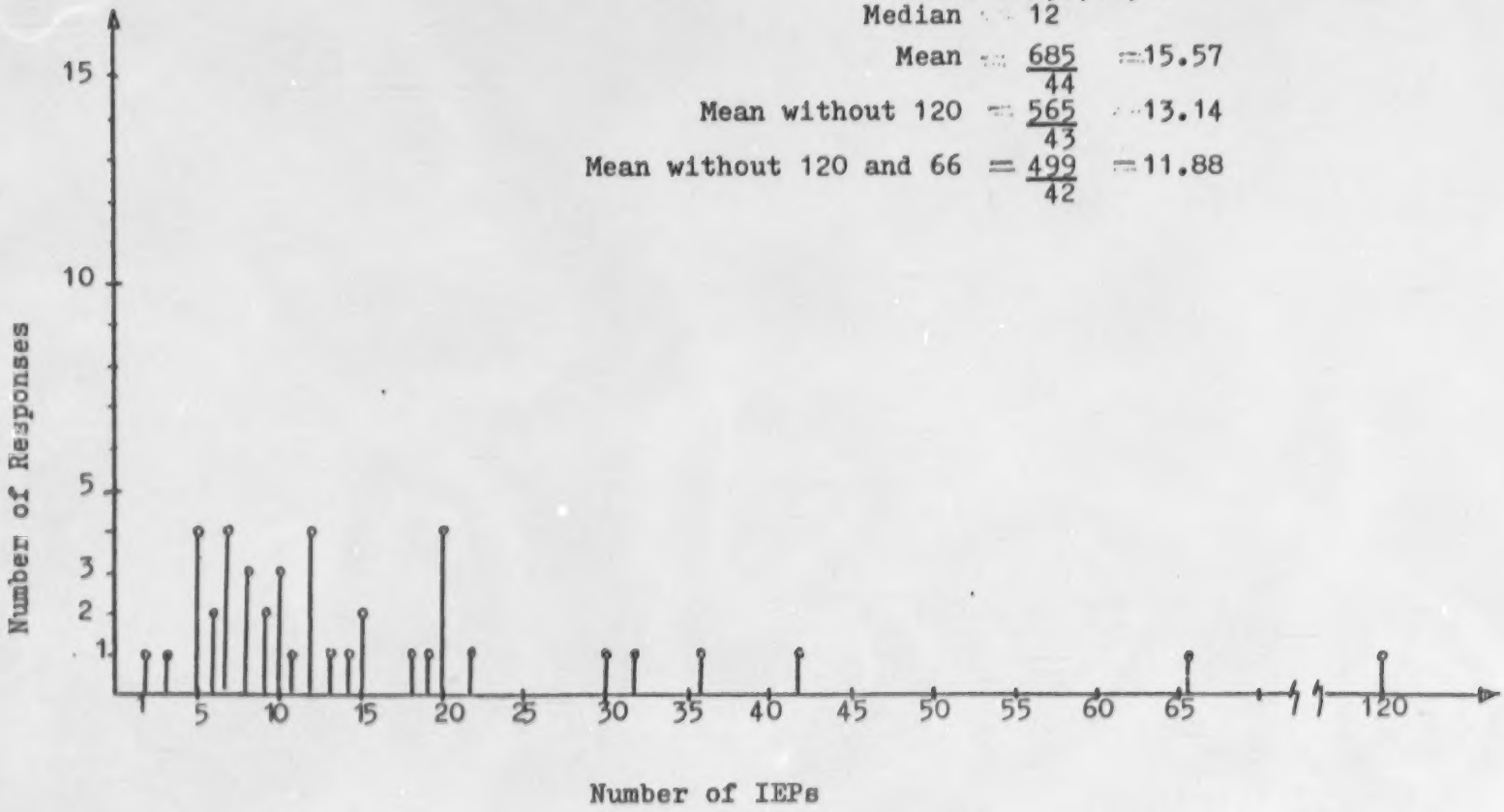
*one response

The total group of teachers surveyed reported they are responsible for a mean of 15.57, or rounded, 16 IEPs, as shown by the figures in Table 6. However, the median of 12 IEPs gives a more realistic measure for the total group, since all teachers were responsible for a range of 2-42 IEPs. except two who reported 66 and 120. Figure 1 provides a frequency chart which graphically shows that 66 and 120 are significantly beyond the range of all other responses. Without these two numbers (See Fig 1), the mean drops to 11.88 which is very near the median, 12.

FIGURE 1

Number of IEPs

Modes = 5,7,12,20
Median = 12
Mean = $\frac{685}{44}$ = 15.57
Mean without 120 = $\frac{565}{43}$ = 13.14
Mean without 120 and 66 = $\frac{499}{42}$ = 11.88



Content of the IEPs

The review of literature on IEP content suggests that the IEP is adequately developed when it contains four to six annual goals and three to four specific objectives for each annual goal. The Office of Special Education recommended a three to four page document. Yet policies and procedures vary greatly.

The questions:

Regarding the content of your IEPs:
Is the number of your annual goals usually 1-3, 4-6, 7 or more?

Table 7

Goals	Regular	Resource	Self Cont.	Other	Total
1-3		27.27%	24%	42.86%	27.27%
4-6	100%*	63.64	40	57.14	47.73
7 or more		9.09	36	0	23.00

*one response

(percentages based on number in each group)

Is the number of your specific objectives per annual goal 1-2, 3-4, 5-10, 11 or more?

Table 8

Objectives	Regular	Resource	Self Cont.	Other	Total
1-2		9.09%	24%	28.57%	20.45%
3-4		18.18	32	57.14	31.82
5-10	100%*	45.45	36	14.29	36.36
11 or more		27.27	8	0	11.36

*one response

Table 7 shows that the highest percentage of teachers in each group write 4 to 6 annual goals, especially resource teachers (63.64%). However, over 25% in three groups "skimp" with 1 to 2 annual goals. That is reasonable when they serve a child in only one area, such as physical education or therapy, as 42.86% "other" and 27.27% "resource" bear out. But self-contained teachers are likely to have an inadequate IEP with 1 to 3 goals (24%), since children who are self-contained have a number of needs. Yet, many self-contained teachers (36%) are writing 7 or more, creating a hefty IEP and possibly a work overload.

Regarding specific objectives, (see Table 8), the resource teachers in particular, write a higher number of objectives (45.45% with 5-10, and 27.27% with 11 or more). As an example, multiply 10 specific objectives times two

annual goals per child, times 20 resource children, and you have 400 objectives for one teacher to handle. That entails an extraordinary amount of work. Hypothetically it may be an exaggeration, but it serves to show that 3 to 4 objectives is much more reasonable for the teacher as well as the child. Looking at the total number of teachers, it appears that nearly half of the group is writing too many objectives, although one fifth are writing too few objectives.

Time Spent to Develop IEPs

The crucial issue in IEP development is the time involved. Teachers agree on the importance of IEPs, but often complain that time demands are unreasonable. For that reason, each teacher was asked to estimate time spent on the four main parts of an IEP for a new referral student and for a current special education student (an updated IEP).

Time Spent on Educational and Related Services

They were asked:

> Estimate as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to determining and writing the recommended educational and related services on an IEP.
>
> ___hr(s) ___min. (new referral)
>
> ___hr(s) ___min. (current special education student)

Table 9

Hours Spent on New Referral IEP: Services

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	2.25*	.	.	. -
resource	2.04	.5	.5	.1-8
self-contained	2.29	2.0	3.0	0-10
other	2.13	1.25	-	.1-6
total .	2.20	2.00	3.0	.1-10

*one response

Table 10

Hours Spent on Current Student IEP: Services

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regulars	1.5*			
resource	1.66	.5	.25	.1-6
self-contained	1.95	1.25	2.	.1-8
other	1.73	1	1,4	.1-4
total	1.83	1.25	1,2	.1-8

*one response

FIGURE 2

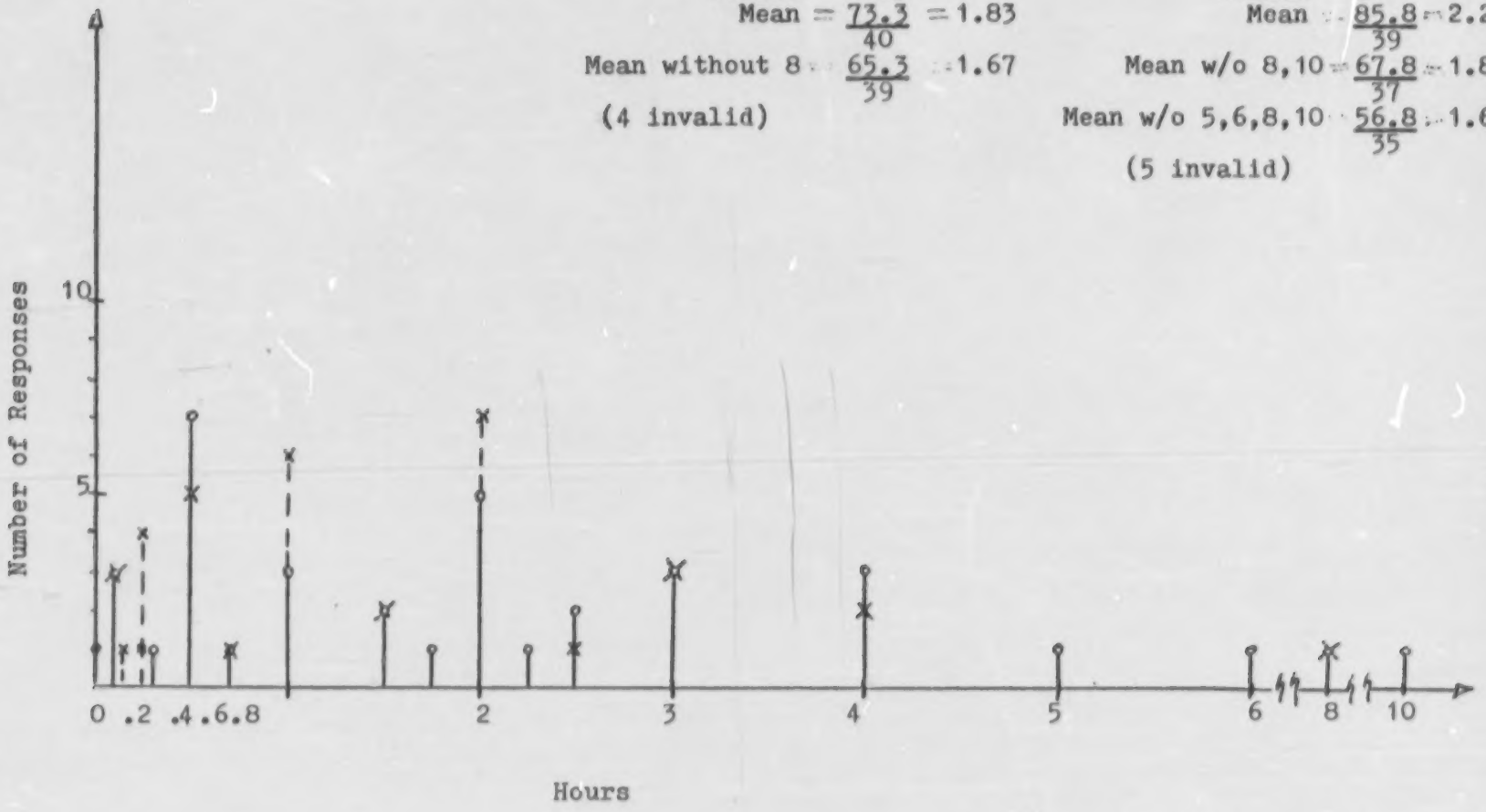
Time Spent Determining Educational and Related Services

Current Student IEP = X

Mode = 1,2
Median = 1.25
Mean = $\frac{73.3}{40}$ = 1.83
Mean without 8 = $\frac{65.3}{39}$ = 1.67
(4 invalid)

New Referral IEP = (

Mode = 3
Median = 2
Mean = $\frac{85.8}{39}$ = 2.2(
Mean w/o 8,10 = $\frac{67.8}{37}$ = 1.8
Mean w/o 5,6,8,10 = $\frac{56.8}{35}$ = 1.6
(5 invalid)



This question seemed to be easily misinterpreted. Many persons asked for help or clarification on the question, and nearly always had a wrong impression of its intent. Since the ranges for the total population surveyed were 0.1-10 (new referral) and 0.1-8 (current special ed.), or a broad range of 6 min. -10 hrs. (See Table 9,10), it appears that many who did not ask for help may have also misinterpreted the question. On the other hand, some teachers may have included meetings and conferences to determine services in such estimates as 4,6, and 8 hours. It is difficult to tell if the mean of 2.20 (new) and 1.83 (current) for the total group is realistic or useful, but it seems it may not be valid. (See Figure 2 for a graph of the results).

It was apparent that those asking for help were not familiar with the meaning of "educational and related services." Once the term was explained, most persons commented that it took less than a half hour. Many are given this brief list of services by the local Committee on the Handicapped. The term "educational and related services" needs to be more widely used and understood by teachers.

Time Spent on Annual Goals

Another question involved time spent on developing annual goals. Teachers were asked:

Estimate as accurately as possibly, how much time you devote to developing and writing (rough draft and final form) the annual goals on an IEP.

___hr(s) ___min. (new referral)
___hr(s) ___min. (current special education student)

Table 11

Hours Spent on New Referral IEP: Goals

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	.5*			
resource(2 invalid*)	1.58	1.25	1,1.5,1	.5-4
self-contained (4 invalid)	1.58	1.5	1,2	.5-3
other (1 invalid)	1.89	2	2,4	.2-4
total	1.63	1.5	2	.2-4

*one response; invalid=no answer, not specific

Table 12

Hours Spent on Current Student IEP: Goals

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	.33*			
resource	1.09	.8	1	.25-3
self-contained (1 invalid)	1.81	1	1	.12-16
other (1 invalid)	1.24	2	2,2.5	.2 -2.5
total	1.51	1	1	.1 -16

*one response; invalid=no answer, not specific

FIGURE 3

Time Spent on Annual Goals

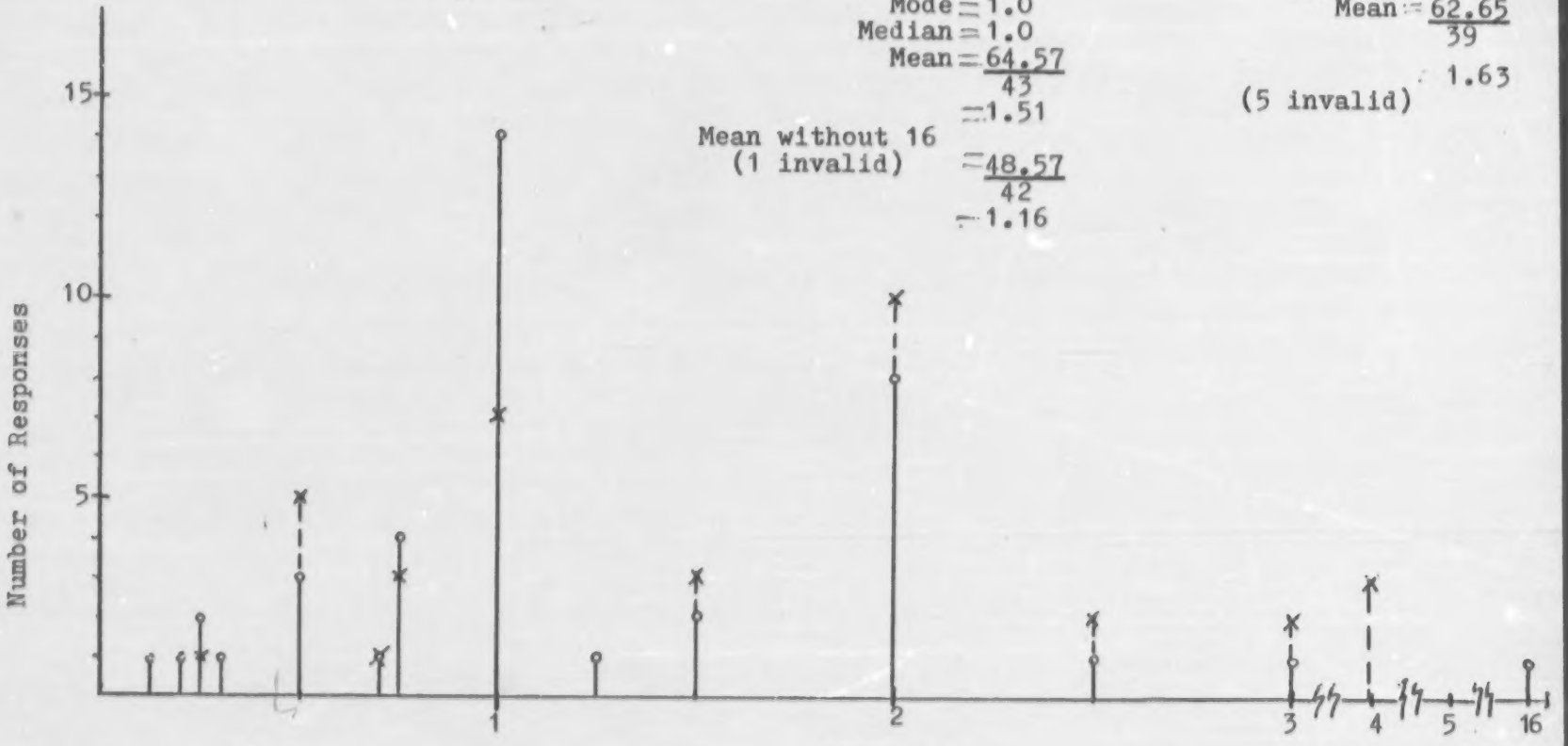
Current Student IEP = O

Mode = 1.0
Median = 1.0
Mean = $\frac{64.57}{43}$
= 1.51

Mean without 16
(1 invalid) = $\frac{48.57}{42}$
= 1.16

New Referral IEP = X

Mode = 2
Median = 1.5
Mean = $\frac{62.65}{39}$
= 1.63
(5 invalid)



The mean amount of time used by the total population to write annual goals was 1.63 hours (new referral), or 1.51 (current special education student). New referral IEPs tooka slightly longer time. Yet, comparison of ranges on Table 11 and 12 shows that as many as 4 hours (new referral) and 16 hours (current) were spent on annual goals: twice as much time on current special education students. Figure 3 illustrates the results. It appears that the median of 1.5 hours to write annual goals for a new referral and the median of 1 hour for current special education students are realistic measures for the total population, since the majority estimated under 2 hours. The self-contained teachers had the greatest range of responses (.12-16 hours) and therefore, the highest mean (1.81 hours) of all, surprisingly on current special education IEPs, not new referrals.

Time Spent on Specific Objectives

The teachers were asked:

> Estimate as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to developing and writing all the specific objectives (including methods, materials, evaluation, current functioning) on the IEP.
>
> ___hr(s)___min. (new referral)
>
> ___hr(s).__min. (current special education student)

Table 13

Hours Spent on New Referral IEP: Objectives

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	1.25*			
resource (1 invalid)	2.55	2	2	1-5
self-contained (5 invalid)	2.41	2.5	2.5	.7-5
other (1 invalid)	1.95	1	4	.2-4
total	2.32	2	2	.2-5

*one response; invalid=no answer, not specific

Table 14

Hours Spent on Current Student IEP: Objectives

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	1*			
resource	1.95	1.5	1.5	.75-5
self-contained (1 invalid)	2.66	1.75	1	.7 -24
other (2 invalid)	1.59	1.88	-	.2-4
total	2.27(1.74**)	1.5	1	.2-24

*one response; invalid=no answer, not specific
**mean without value 24

On new referral IEPs, the total group surveyed spend an average of 2.32 hours on specific objectives of an IEP, as shown in Table 13. The regular classroom teacher reported spending 1.25 hours, considerably less than the average. For current special education IEPs (Table 14), the amounts of time spent on specific objectives were slightly less. The mean of the total group was 2.27 hours, including one self-contained teacher who reported 24 hours. The mean for the total group without that value of 24 would be 1.74 hours, or about one-half hour less. The teacher who spends 24 hours also has a high number of annual goals (16-24) for which she writes 3-4 objectives each. However, the value of 24 hours does not affect the mean to a large degree (See Figure 4). That teacher reported only time spent on Current IEPs for every question.

Time Spent on Present Level of Performance

Regarding present level on IEPs, the teachers were asked:

> Estimate, as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to evaluation, assessment, and scoring to determine and write a student's present level of performance on the IEP.
>
> ___hr(s)___min. (new referral)
>
> ___hr(s)___min..(current special education student)

FIGURE 4

Time Spent on Specific Objectives

Current Student IEP = O
Mode = 1.0
Median = 1.5
Mean = $\frac{95.9}{42}$ = 2.27
w/o 24:
Mean = $\frac{71.9}{41}$ = 1.74
(2 invalid)

New Referral IEP = X
Mode = 2.0
Median = 2.0
Mean = $\frac{88.15}{38}$ = 2.32
(6 invalid)

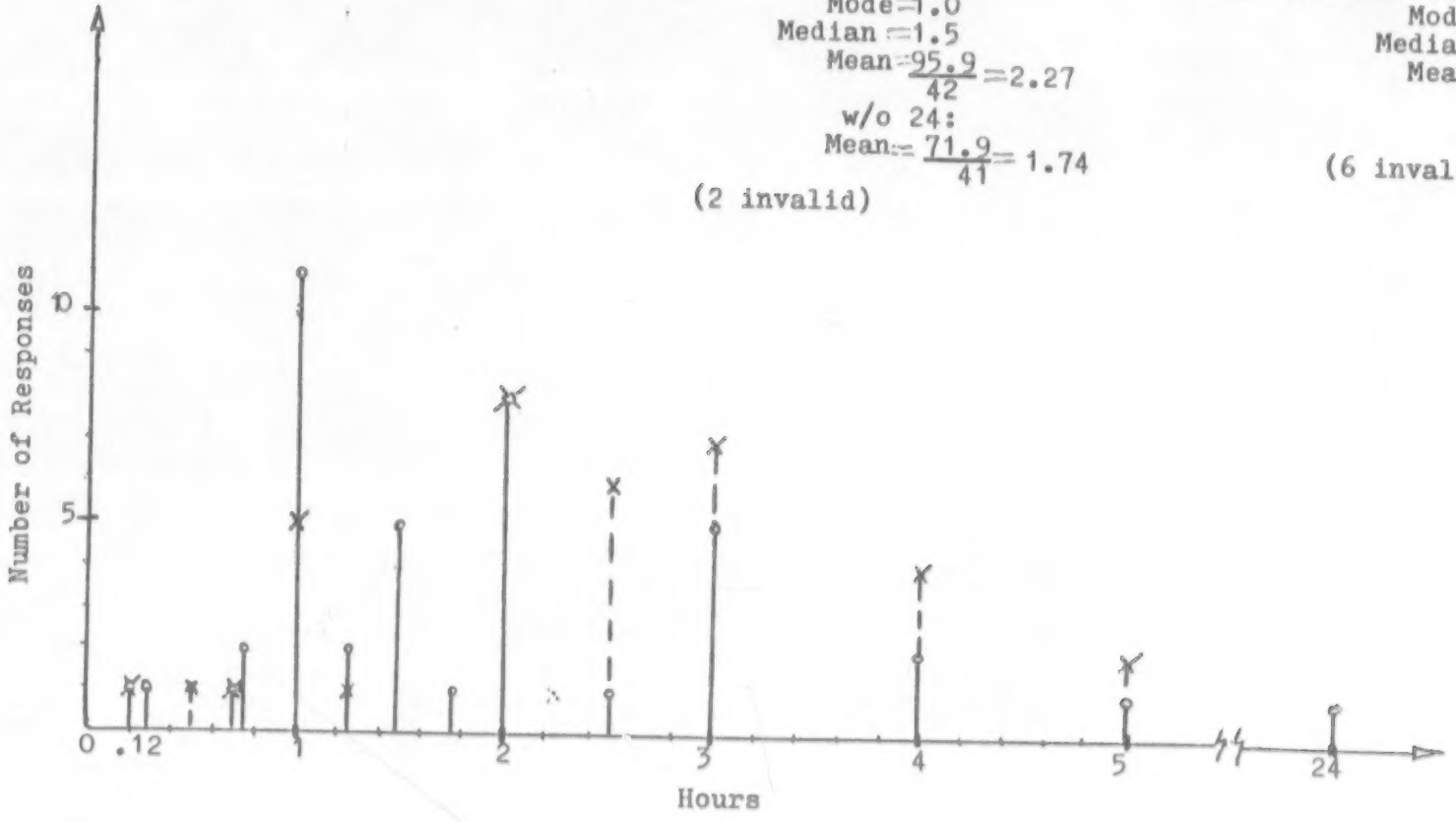


Table 15

Hours Spent on New Referral IEPs: Present Level

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	4*			
resource (2 invalid)	3.5 (2.06 w/o 15)	2.25	.5	.5-15
self-contained (6 invalid)	3.01 (2.31 w/o 10,8)	2	2	.7-10
other	1.94	1.5	-	.25-6
total	2.95	2	2	.25-15

*one response; invalid=no answer, not specific

Table 16

Hours Spent on Current Student IEP

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	4*			
resource	2.28	2	2	.25-10
self-contained	5.70(2.33*)	2	1,2	.5 -80
other	1.47	.8	-	0 -4
total	4.06(2.21*)	2	2	.1 -80

FIGURE 5

Time Spent on Present Level of Performance

Current Student IEP: X

Mode: 2.0

Median: 2.0

Mean: $\frac{170.52}{42}$ = 4.06

Without 80:

Mean: $\frac{90.52}{41}$ = 2.21

(2 invalid)

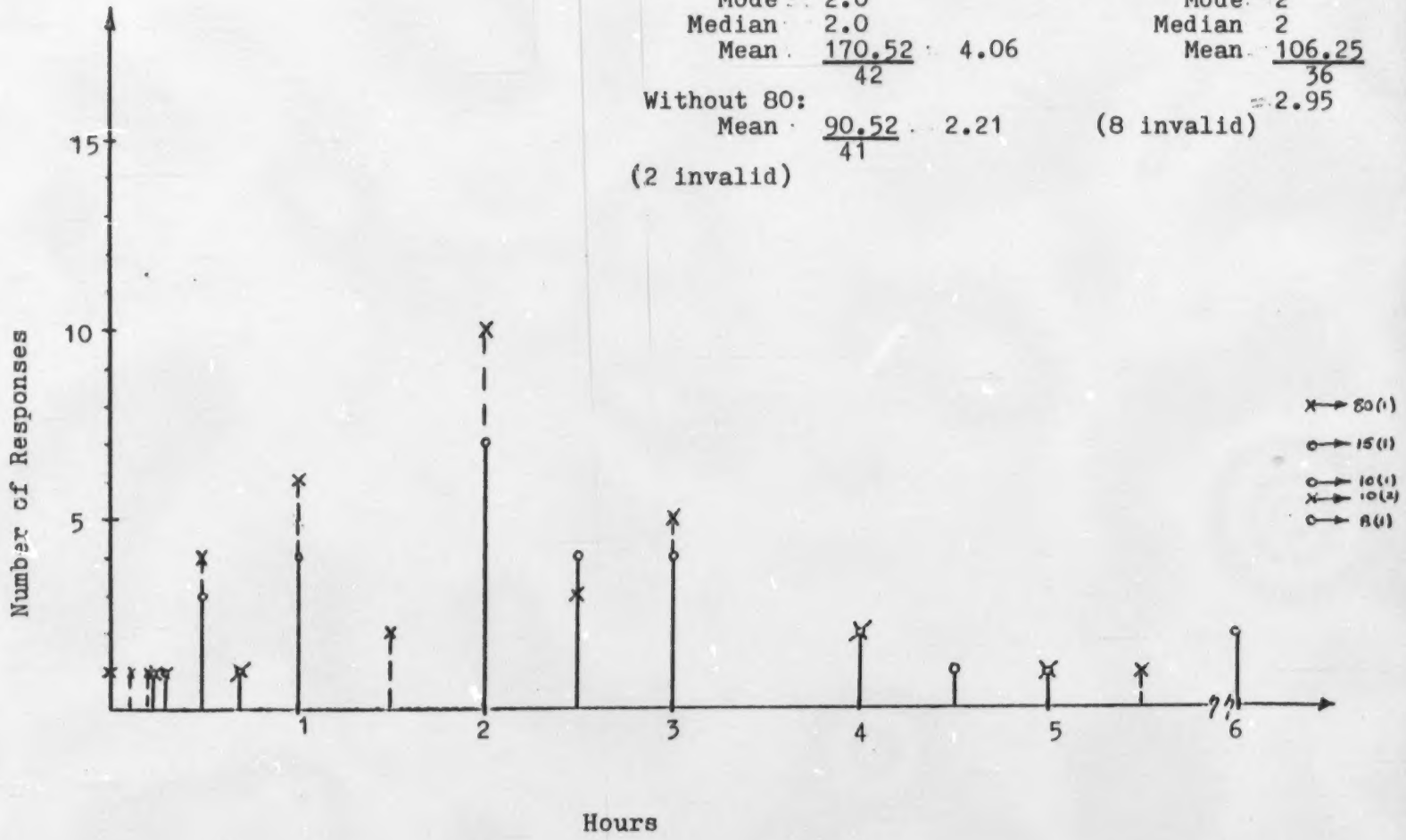
New Referral IEPs: 0

Mode: 2

Median: 2

Mean: $\frac{106.25}{36}$ = 2.95

(8 invalid)



This part of the IEP consumes the most time, according to this population. On a new referral, the mean for the total population was 2.95. The regular classroom teacher with 4 hours and resource teachers with 3.5 hours spend the most time determining and writing the present level of performance. On a current student IEP, which usually entails somewhat less work and time, the mean total for the population was 4.06. Again the one teacher reporting 80 hours (She commented that the school requires charted observation for two weeks) caused the mean to distort to nearly double. Without the value of 80 hours, the mean is 2.21 hours which is close to the median, 2 hours. Therefore the median is the more realistic measure for the total population. (See Figure 5).

Instructional Time Spent on Present Level

In addition to time estimated to determine present level of performance on an IEP, teachers were also asked how much of that time occupied regular teaching hours. The question:

> How much of the time that you estimated for evaluation, assessment, and scoring procedures (previous question) must occur during instructional hours of the day?

Table 17

Hours Spent on New Referral IEP: Instructional Time

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	4			
resource (2 invalid)	2.97	1.75	3	.25-12
self-contained (6 invalid)	2.63(2.0*)	1	1	0 -14
other (1 invalid)	1.87	1	4	0 -4
total	2.63	1.5	1	0 -14

*without value of 14

Table 18

Hours Spent on Current Student IEP: Instructional Time

Teachers	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
regular	4			
resource (1 invalid)	2.28 (1.64 w/o 8)	2	2	.25-8
self-contained (2 invalid)	5.45(2.06*)	1.5	1	0 -80
other (1 invalid)	.87	2	.2	0 - 2
total	3.93 (1.98*)	1.50	2	0 - 80

*mean without 80

FIGURE 6

Time Spent During Instructional Hours for Assessment Procedures

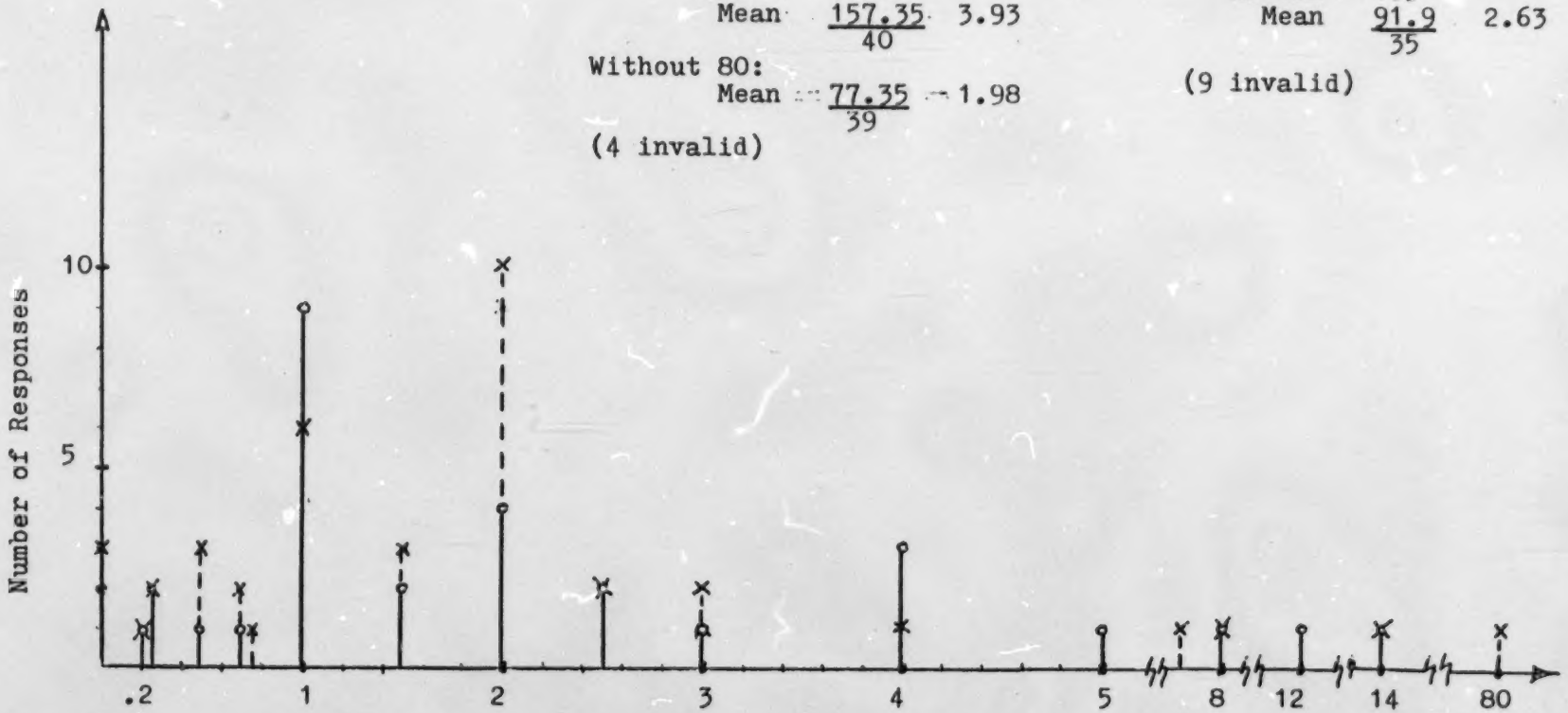
Current IEP : X
Mode : 2.00
Median : 1.50
Mean : $\frac{157.35}{40}$ 3.93

Without 80:
Mean : $\frac{77.35}{39}$ 1.98

(4 invalid)

New Referral IEP : 0
Mode : 1.00
Median : 1.5
Mean : $\frac{91.9}{35}$ 2.63

(9 invalid)



Instructional time is affected by this part of the IEP. For a new referral, a mean of 2.63 hours for assessment must occur during instructional hours, according to the total group. On a current IEP, the mean for the total group is 3.93. The range 0 to 80 again makes the median of 1.50 hours a more realistic measure (See Figure 6).

A comparison of Tables 15-18 answers the question of how much time spent on present level must occur during instructional hours, according to the whole group. The answer:

New Referral IEP = 2.63 hours our of 2.95 hours (means)

Current Student IEP ≃ 1.5 hours out of 2 hours (medians)

Instructional time is affected, and a large number of IEPs could complicate the matter.

Instructional Time Spent on IEP Related Work

To find out if it is necessary to devote additional hours during regular teaching hours for other work on IEPs besides determining present levels, teachers were asked:

> In addition to time devoted to determining present levels of performance, how much more time per IEP would you estimate is used during instructional hours for IEP related work (reviewing materials, writing goals and objectives, parent conferences, teacher contacts, etc.)?

Table 19

Time	Regular	Resource	Self-Cont.	Other	Total
none		9.09%*	12%	14.29%*	9.09%
less than one hour		18.18	20	28.57	20.45
one to two hours	100%*	45.45	36	28.57	38.64
greater than two hours		27.27	28	14.29*	27.27

* one response

Special education teachers often must consult and conference with other teachers serving a handicapped student or with IEP team members (parents included), as well as review appropriate materials and write IEP parts. The highest percentage of teachers in the total population (38.64%) reported that 1 to 2 hours of instructional time per IEP must be devoted to these necessary activities, with 45.45% of resource teachers reporting that amount of time (See Table 19). Only one resource teacher, one "other" (a remedial teacher at a juvenile detention facility), and five self-contained teachers answered "none." Over half of the total population uses 1-2 hours or greater than two hours during instructional time for related IEP activities beyond the reported mean of instructional time used for assessment, evaluation and scoring.

This means that for new referrals, this population uses 2.44 hours (assessment, etc.) plus a possible 1 to 2 or more hours of instructional time to develop IEPs, or approximately 3½ -4½ hours or more instructional time per IEP.

Since assessment, diagnosis of problems, consultation, and planning are so vital to special education success, 3½ to 4½ hours of class time devoted to such activities for one handicapped student does not seem to be an expensive trade-off for instructional time. Review and reinforcement learning is likely to be taking place. It is common for all types of teachers to teach review lessons during beginning and ending weeks of the school year. However, if a large amount of instructional time must be carried on for over a month or more, as in the case of a therapist with 125 IEPs to complete, the school district or agency should examine alternative ways of developing IEPs for such a person.

Reviewing and Updating IEPs

Teachers were asked:

> How often do you review and update your IEPs?

Table 20

Review and Update	%	Number
Once annually	11.36	5
Twice a year	31.82	14
Three times a year	27.27	12
Four or more times a year	29.55	13

FIGURE 7

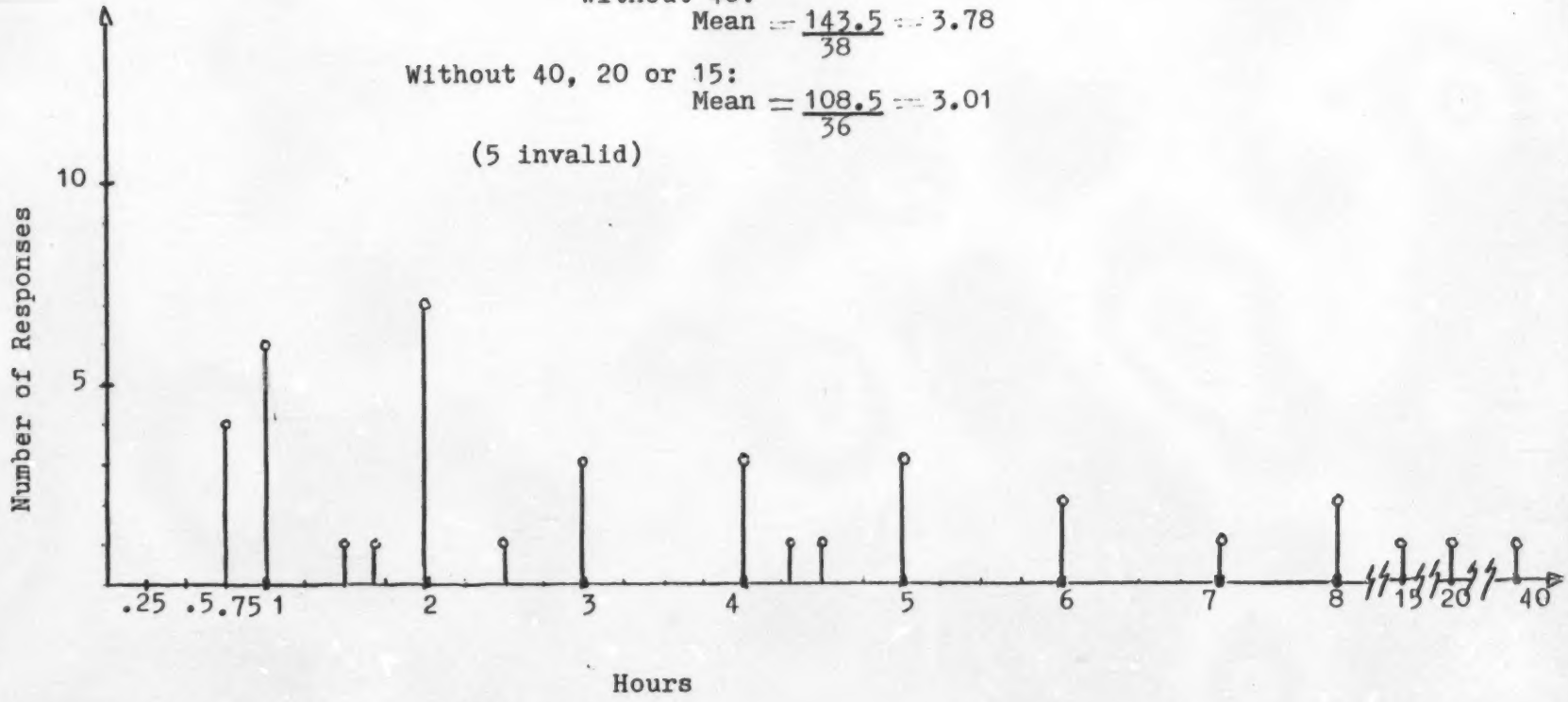
Time Spent Reviewing and Updating

Mode = 2.00
Median = 2.00
Mean = $\frac{183.5}{39}$ = 4.71

Without 40:
Mean = $\frac{143.5}{38}$ = 3.78

Without 40, 20 or 15:
Mean = $\frac{108.5}{36}$ = 3.01

(5 invalid)



The law demands at least an annual review. But this population reviews and updates 1 to 4 or more times a year.

Concerning reviewing and updating IEPs, teachers were asked:

> Estimate the average amount of time per year you spend in reviewing and updating one IEP:
>
> ___hr(s)___min.

The results were: a mean of 4.71 hours, a range of .75-80 hours, a median of 2 hours, and a mode of 2 hours. Because of the wide range, the median of 2 hours is more accurate for the total group. (See Figure 7).

The IEP Conference

Teachers were asked to rate the way their IEP development was related to the IEP conference, as shown in Table 21. A majority of those surveyed, 29 of 44 or 65.91%, said that their IEP was always prepared in advance and presented at the IEP conference. Another 15.91% (7) said that their IEPs are usually prepared in the same manner. The OSE Policy Paper (1979) has stated that such a procedure is improper; yet only 4.55% (2) said that their IEP is prepared with input from an initial parent-team conference prior to the IEP conference, a recommended procedure. Only 11.36% said that their IEP is both prepared and completed during the IEP conference, a procedure that also meets the intent of P.L. 94-142.

Table 21

Rating Scale on Type of Conferencing and Provision of Time

Items	Always	Usually	Some times	Seldom	Never
An IEP that you develop is prepared in advance and presented at the IEP conference.	%65.91	15.91	9.09	0	6.82
	# 29	7	4	0	3
An IEP that you develop is prepared with input from an initial parent-team conference prior to the IEP conference .	%4.55	6.82	36.36	20.45	29.55
	# 2	3	16	9	13
An IEP that you develop is both prepared and completed during the IEP conference.	%11.36	9.09	13.64	18.18	47.73
	# 5	4	6	8	21
You receive compensation for work after hours.	% 6.82	4.55	0	2.27	84.09
	# 3	2	0	1	37
Support staff provide free periods during school day for IEP assessment and planning.	% 9.09	4.55	9.09	13.64	63.64
	# 4	2	4	6	28
The classroom or school is closed during a specified time to facilitate the development of IEPs.	% 4.55	2.27	6.82	6.82	79.55
	# 2	1	3	3	35
You are expected to develop IEPs during your normal working hours or personal time if necessary.	%65.91	20.45	4.55	0	9.09
	# 29	9	2	0	4
You devote extensive personal time to the development of IEPs.	%52.27	22.73	11.36	6.82	6.82
	# 23	10	5	3	3

Overall, the large majority of this population seem to be presenting a completed IEP at the IEP conference. However, one teacher using that procedure commented that their IEP can be changed, added to, or have parts deleted at the IEP conference. Others may do this, but did not indicate it on the questionnaire.

The Provision of Time

Compensation for work after hours on IEPs, one of the recommended ways to handle time demands, seems to be rare. Table 21 shows that 84.09% of the teachers said they never receive compensation. There were 6.82% (3) who always receive it, while 4.55% (2) usually receive it. Chances are slightly better in this population for support staff to provide free periods for IEP work. The same Table shows that 9.09% always are provided free periods and 4.55%, usually. But 63.64% receive no free periods. Neither compensation or support staff are being offered very much to help ease the time demands. Classroom or school closings are also rare: 4.55% are fortunate enough to have closings for a specified IEP time.

One teacher commented that IEP conferencing with parents is a "draining" process, though it generally allows parents to be actively involved with the teacher. Another teacher felt that IEP conferences should be held during regular school hours, not after. That seems reasonable if no compensation is involved, but support staff then

becomes the issue.

A majority (65.91%) of the population are always expected to develop IEPs during normal working hours or personal time if necessary. Another 20.45% are usually expected to do the same. This seems to say that schools and agencies are generally accomodating time demand very little for this population: a much needed support for weary special education teachers, according to the literature.

The item on personal time prompted several written comments. Over half (52.27%) of the teachers always spend extensive personal time on the development of IEPs, while 22.73% reported "usually." Some of the comments:

> "I feel totally overwhelmed doing IEPs during one free period a day and at home. I don't like doing them alone and being fully responsible for a child's program. More relief time is needed."

> "IEPs are a tremendous amount of work done on my <u>own</u> time."

> "With 20 IEPs. . .there needs to be more school time set aside for their completion."

> "A teacher in Special Education spends extensive amounts of their own time writing up IEPs and after hours conferences to accomodate parents."

<u>General Comments by Teachers</u>

Other general comments pointed up that IEPs are "long and tedious. . .but necessary." One teacher who writes an average of 16 to 24 annual goals and 3 to 4 objectives per goal complained that the "administration

is too concerned with professional appearance of their 'paper work.'" That teacher would, instead, prefer to see more direct observation by administration. Another teacher said the IEP has positive merits but the "manner in which it has been forced upon teachers leaves much to be desired... no allowances have been made for testing, conferences and writing rough and final draft." Another sees the IEP as "impractical as a day to day teaching tool" (the literature upholds that it is not to be a daily instructional plan). Last, three teachers wrote that it is difficult to estimate the approximate time involved since it is accomplished over a period of time.

Again, as in the literature, time is a central issue. Only two teachers (one institution, one juvenile detention facility) reported that IEPs present no problem, with little time needed for assessment and revision. The value of the IEP is rarely questioned: not one rebuff from this population. But time continues to be an issue.

Other Research Questions Addressed

A number of other questions relating to time spent on developing IEPs were addressed by using the information gained from the questionnaire. Some general trends were then noted from analysis of the information. When considering total amounts of time spent on the whole IEP, a second mean was often figured without data from question number

seven on the questionnaire (time spent on educational and related services) since it was so often misinterpreted. Comparisons could then be made. Also, if a response by one person skewed the distribution significantly, a second mean was figured without that response to provide comparison of the means.

First, are first-year teachers spending considerably more time developing IEPs than more experienced teachers?

Table 22

Teaching Experience and Hours Spent: Total IEP

Years of Experience	No.	Mean for New IEP	Without #7	Mean for Current IEP	Without #7
1	5	13.4	(10.8)	11.9	(9.1)
5-10	9	5.89	(4.46)	4.88*	(3.78*)
>10	3	4.18	(3.25)	4.87	(3.96)

*the mean without an 80 hours response (the mean including the 80=18.56, a significant skew).

From the information presented in Table 22, it can be concluded that first-year teachers in this population are spending a little over three times as much time as those with 10 or more years experience on new referral IEPs. They spend over twice as much time as the more experienced on current student IEPs. Also, in general, it seems that as years of teaching experience increase, the time to develop IEPs decreases. Hopefully, the

quality remains high. (Note: all mean hours in Table 22 refer to entire development of the IEP parts discussed in this study as well as the writing of the IEP).

A second question:

Does any particular training decrease time?

Table 23

Training and Hours Spent: Total IEP

Type of Training	No.	Mean for New IEP	Without #7	Mean for Current IEP	Without #7
No training	7	7.92	(6.63)	5.11	(4.04)
Degree training	11	9.8	(7.11)	7.71	(5.59)

Since undergraduate and graduate training are formal and more consistent, degree training was compared to no training. Those with no training spend somewhat less time than those with degree training, on new referral IEPs as well as current IEPs. There is less of a difference in the mean hours spent when question 7 (educational/related services) is not included. Quality of the IEP may be an issue in this comparison, but it can be concluded that those with no training spend less time on IEPs than those who are formally trained.

The third question:

> Are teachers writing IEPs for the first time taking considerably more time than those experienced at IEP development and writing?

Table 24

Years of IEP Experience and Hours Spent: Total IEP

Years of IEP Experience	No.	Mean for New IEP	Without #7	Mean for Current IEP	Without #7
1	10	10.88	(8.82)	9.26	(6.64)
4	11	7.64	(6.36)	6.67*	(4.61*)

*mean without an 80 hour response (the mean including the 80=17.7, a significant skew).

Teachers in this population who are writing IEPs for the first time are spending about 3 hours more than teachers with four years' IEP experience on new referral IEPs. On current IEPs, first-timers are spending about 2½ hours longer. Without question 7 (services), the differences are lessen ed by about ½ hour. It appears that, as years of IEP experience increase, the time spent decreases.

The fourth question:

> Do higher numbers of IEPs per teacher mean faster development time?

Table 25

Number of IEPs and Hours Spent: Total IEP

Average No. of IEPs	Mean for New IEP	Without #7	Mean for Current IEP	Without #7
> 20(50)	7.04	5.72	6.07	4.90
< 5 (4)	7.90	4.70	6.60	4.10

Comparing those with >20 and those with < 5 IEPs to develop, the means show that a higher number of IEPs can contribute a decrease in IEP development hours. The decrease is even more pronounced when comparing hours without question 7 (services) in the mean.

The last question:

> Does a higher number of goals and objectives contribute to increase time spent on IEPs?

Table 26

Number of Goals/Objectives and Time Spent: Total IEP

No. of goals/obj.	No. of teachers	Mean for new IEP	Without #7	Mean for Current IEP	Without #7
goals					
>6	10	9.07	7.16	6.31*	3.85*
1-3	12	6.23	4.35	5.20	3.75
objectives					
5-10	16	8.35	6.30	7.32	5.85
1-2	9	7.11	5.96	4.75	3.79

*mean without 128 response, a significant skew

The information found in Table 26 bears out the logical conclusion that as the number of goals and objectives increase, the average time spent on an IEP increases. The differences in hours spent on >6 goals and 1-3 goals range from .10(6 min.) to 2.84 hours. The differences in hours spent on 5-10 objectives and 1-2 objectives range from .34 (18 min.) to 2.57 hours. But the time did increase in all cases.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Restatement of the Problem

How much time are teachers spending on developing an Individualized Education Plan? The purpose of this study is to answer that question and also to discover any implications regarding instructional time lost in the IEP process.

Description of Procedures

Descriptive research was conducted using a questionnaire investigation with central tendency measures, percentages, and a rating scale used for analysis of the data collected. The population consisted of 44 teachers who were enrolled in Special Education Graduate Courses at The State University of New York at New Paltz (Fall, 1980), and who were currently responsible for the development of IEPs.

Major Findings

Results show that the teachers surveyed are spending an average of 2.20 hours on listing educational and related services (often misinterpreted by respondents), 1.63 hours on annual goals, 2.32 hours on specific objectives, and 2.95 hours on determining present levels of performance,

all based on new referral IEPs. Current IEPs took slightly shorter amounts of time. An average of 2.63 hours was estimated for time spent during instructional hours for assessments, while one to two hours were spent during instructional hours for related IEP work. A median of 2 hours was estimated for time spent for review and updating.

The following general trends were observed in the analysis. As the years of teaching experience increased, the time to develop IEPs decreased. Type of training had no significant effect, although those with no training spent less time on developing IEPs. As years of IEP experience increased, the time spent decreased. A high number of IEPs for a teacher decreased time spent on each IEP. As the number of goals and objectives increased, the average times spent on them increased.

A large majority of the teachers complete an IEP and present it at the IEP conference. A substantial majority use extensive amounts of personal time to develop and complete their IEPs. The greatest number of comments were written in regard to the issue of time.

Conclusions

It is apparent that teachers are still devoting large amounts of time on IEPs. Many teachers are alarmed about the time demands or the overwhelming responsibility when they have little or no help on developing IEPs. It also seems that instructional time is affected, mostly

by time spent determining the present level of performance on the child's IEP. The 3½ to 4½ hours involved is not judged to be an expensive trade-off for instructional time, provided it does not occur more than once or twice a year.

Procedures still vary greatly. Schools and agencies need to explore the alternative methods to alleviate time demands. Teacher morale can be enhanced, as reflected by two persons who have no problems with IEP time because of policy.

Recommendations for Further Investigation

This study shows that time is still an issue and that accomodations are rarely being provided by schools and agencies to alleviate the issue. Further study is needed to confirm that the following recommendations put into practice can considerably alleviate the time demands: (1) Teachers should primarily prepare the IEP at the IEP conference with team input, (2) Teachers should limit the IEP with 4-6 goals and 3-4 specific objectives per annual goal. Further study is also needed to explore any effect of the instructional time lost to IEP development upon student achievement, and the frequency of the effect. Schools and agencies need to address the problem of time and this study provides comparison information and alternative methods that meet requirements of law. The survey (in the Appendix) can be used for needs assessment before utilizing alternative methods.

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APPENDIX

October, 1980

Dear Teacher,

This survey is being conducted to gather information regarding the development of Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). The results will be used to determine how much time teachers are presently using to develop IEPs, and to discover any implications regarding the direct effect of that time amount upon instructional hours.

This information will be of interest to teachers, administrators, unions, school districts, and others concerned about the issure of time devoted to individual programming. It will be appreciated if your response reflects your personal style in the IEP process.

Thank you.

Please check one.

1. What type of teaching position do you presently hold?
   _____ a. regular classroom
   _____ b. special education self-contained
   _____ c. resource
   _____ d. therapist, counsellor, or other_____

   Type of handicapping condition: _____
   Level: ___preschool ___elementary ____middle ____secondary

2. Counting this year, how many years have you been teaching or professionally employed in direct service to students?
   _____ a. 1 year
   _____ b. 2 to 4 years
   _____ c. 5 to 10 years
   _____ d. 11 or more years

3. How many years have you been responsible for the development of one or more Individualized Education Plans, as mandated October, 1977, by Public Law 94-142?
   _____ a. 1 year
   _____ b. 2 years
   _____ c. 3 years
   _____ d. 4 years

4. What kind of training have you received regarding development of IEPs? (mark all that apply)
   _____ a. undergraduate and/or graduate training
   _____ b. inservice
   _____ c. seminars, conferences
   _____ d. no special training
   _____ e. other

5. How many IEPs are you presently responsible for? _____

6. Regarding the content of your IEPs:
   Is the number of your annual goals usually
   _____ a. 1 to 3
   _____ b. 4 to 6
   _____ c. 7 or more
   Is the number of your specific objectives per annual goal usually
   _____ a. 1 to 2
   _____ b. 3 to 4
   _____ c. 5 to 10
   _____ d. 11 or more

7. Estimate, as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to determining and writing the recommended educational and related services on an IEP.
   _____hr.(s) ____min. (new referral)
   _____hrs(s) ____min. (current special education student)

8. Estimate, as accurately as possible, how much time you devoted to developing and writing (rough draft and final form) the annual goals on an IEP.

____hr.(s) ____min. (new referral)
____hr.(s) ____min. (current special education student)

9. Estimate, as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to developing and writing all the specific objectives (including methods, materials, evaluation, current functioning) on an IEP.

_____ hr.(s) _____ min. (new referral)
_____ hr.(s) _____ min. (current special education student)

10. Estimate, as accurately as possible, how much time you devote to evaluation, assessment, and scoring procedures (formal and informal) in order to determine and write a student's present level of performance on the IEP.

____hr.(s) ____min. (new referral)
____hr.(s) ____min. (current special education student)

11. How much of the time that you estimated for evaluation, assessment, and scoring procedures (item 10) must occur during instructional hours of the day?

____hr.(s) ____min. (new referral)
____hr.(s) ____min. (current special education student)

12. In addition to time devoted to determing present level of performance, how much more time per IEP would you estimate is used during instructional hours for IEP related work (reviewing materials, writing goals/objectives, parent conferences, teacher contacts, etc.)

____a. none
____b. less than 1 hour
____c. 1 to 2 hours
____d. greater than 2 hours

13. How often do you review and update your IEPs?

____a. once annually
____b. twice a year
____c. three times a year
____d. four or more times a year

14. Estimate the average amount of time per year you spend in reviewing and updating one IEP:

____hr.(s) ____min.

Place check in appropriate column for each item:	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
An IEP that you develop is prepared in advance and presented at the IEP conference.					
An IEP that you develop is prepared with input from an initial parent-team conference prior to the IEP conference.					
An IEP that you develop is both prepared and completed during the IEP conference.					
You receive compensation for work after hours.					
Support staff provide free periods during school day for IEP assessment and planning.					
The classroom or school is closed during a specified time to facilitate the development of IEPs.					
You are expected to develop IEPs during your normal working hours or personal time if necessary.					
You devote extensive personal time to the development of IEPs.					

Please add comments, if you wish, regarding the processes discussed and the issue of time involved in IEP development.